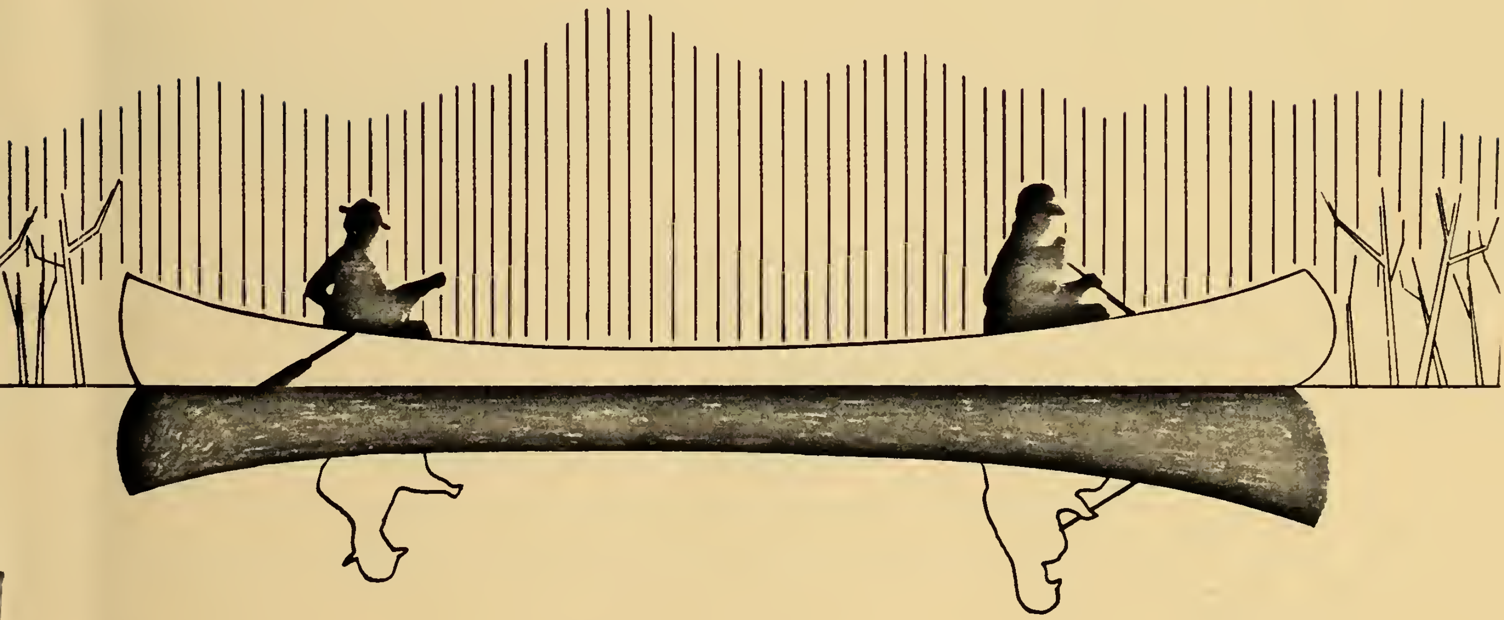
Draft Proposal/Environmental Assessment

River Use Management Plan

June 1982

BUFFALO NATIONAL RIVER, ARKANSAS



Draft
Proposal/Environmental Assessment
River Use Management Plan
Supplement to the General Management Plan
Buffalo National River, Arkansas

Prepared by:

Buffalo National River and
Southwest Regional Office

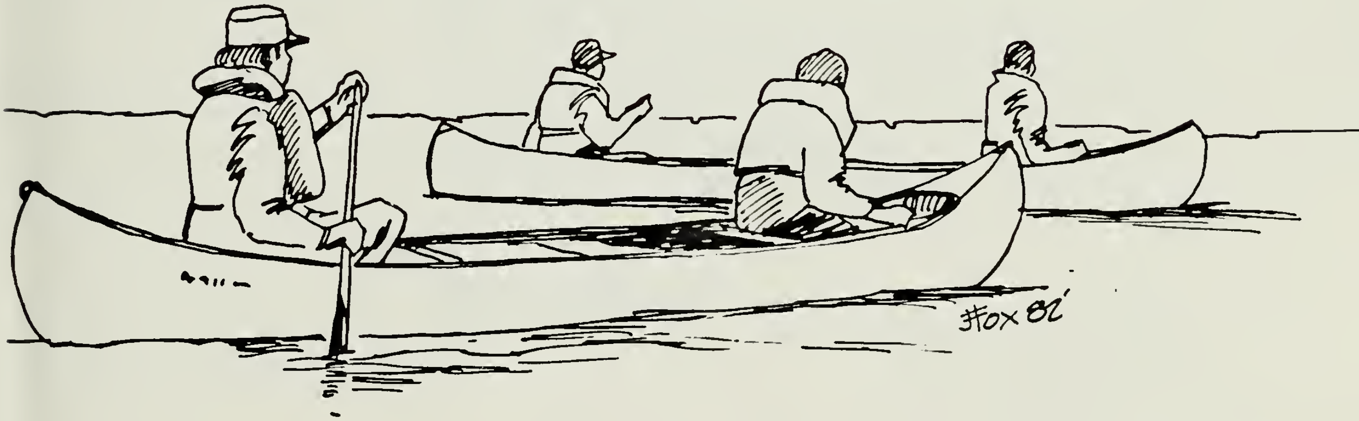
1982

PROLOGUE

The quality of the resources—the clarity and purity of the water, the clean air, the forests and meadows only gently touched by the hand of man—makes the Buffalo National River a special place to visit. An important aspect of the Buffalo's quality is variety, not only in the landscape, geological features, and plant and animal life, but also in the character of the river itself, which ranges from white water rushing by steep bluffs to broad tranquil expanses flowing through meadows and forested hills.

As varied as the river itself are the people who come to enjoy it: Groups of college students come to "cut loose" after a long winter of classes and exams, but so do individuals seeking a challenging canoeing experience or a few days of solitude. There are long-term residents of the area carrying on their traditional uses of the river, including fishing, swimming, hunting, floating, and large family picnics. There are also families passing through who are experiencing the river for the first time. The Buffalo National River serves people of all ages, background, interests, and needs; however, as the river attracts ever increasing numbers of visitors, conflicts arise, and the very qualities that brought the visitors to the river in the first place begin to be threatened.

Management's goal at the Buffalo National River is a quality visitor experience in harmony with the superlative resources of the Buffalo River.



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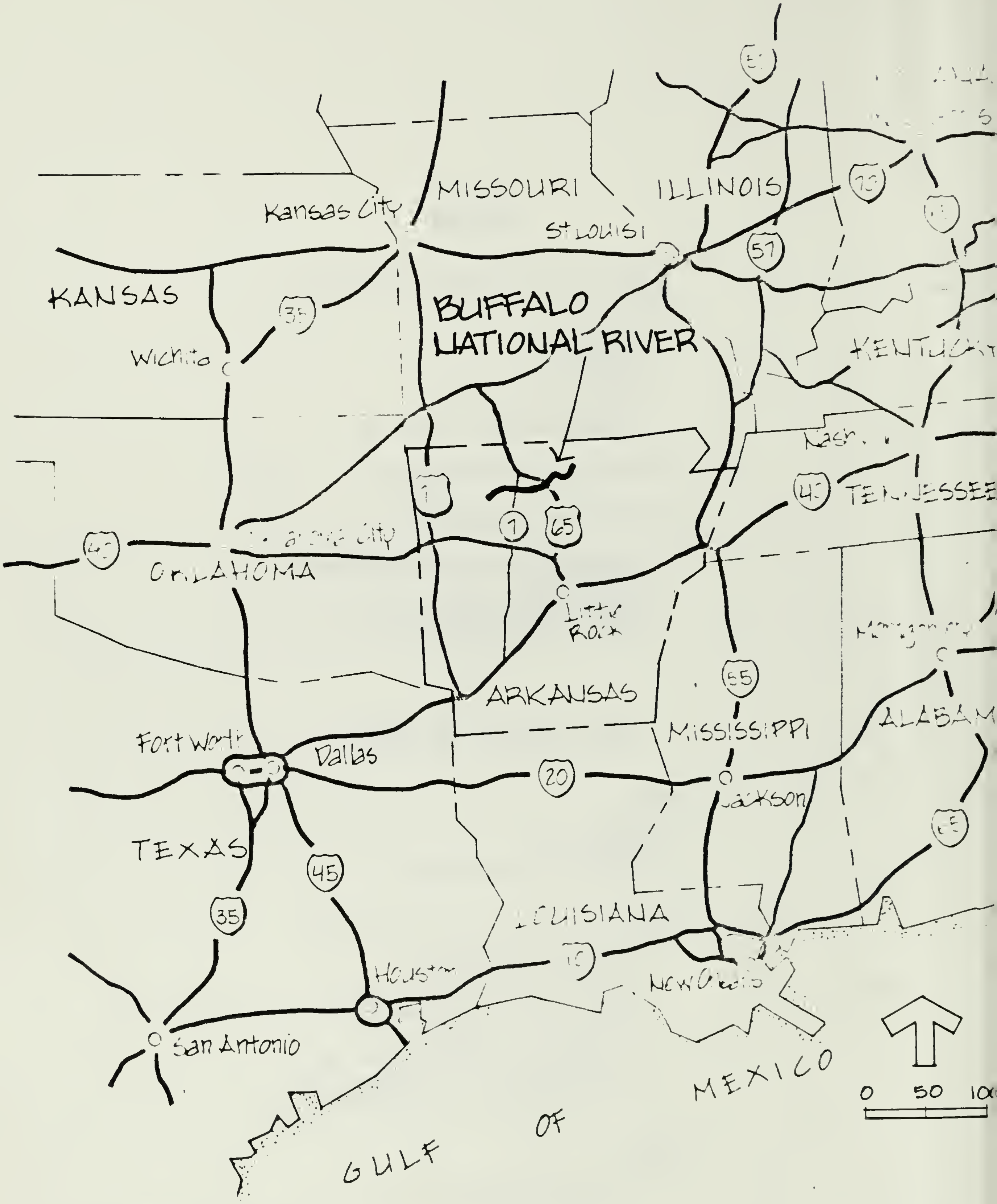

region

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BACKGROUND AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

The Buffalo River's outstanding scenic and recreational resources were recognized as early as 1935, when the Buffalo River State Park was established. However, despite subsequent proposals to dam the river and even flood the park itself, little land was set aside to preserve the natural and recreational qualities of the river.

In the late 1950s and in the 1960s, as water-resource developments progressed, people realized that places like the Buffalo River were becoming more and more scarce, and support for the preservation of the Buffalo River grew. In 1972, Congress passed Public Law 92-237 establishing the Buffalo National River for the following purpose:

> ....conserving and interpreting an area containing unique scenic and scientific features, and preserving as a free-flowing stream an important segment of the Buffalo River in Arkansas for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations.

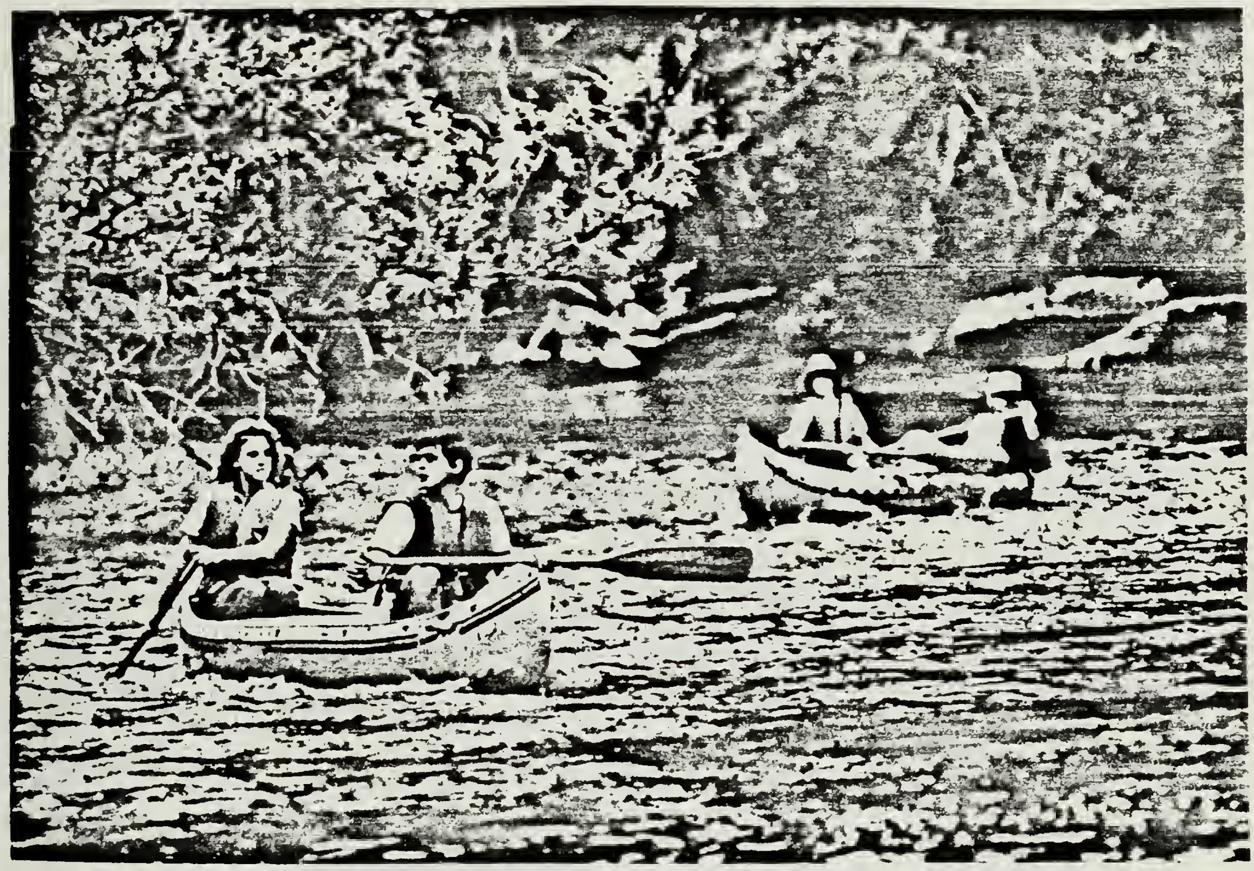
This legislation also required that lands suitable for wilderness be studied. The result was Public Law 95-625 (November 10, 1978) which designated three wilderness areas to be administered in accordance with the Wilderness Act of 1964.

In 1975, a master plan for the Buffalo National River was approved. In addition to brief descriptions of the purpose of the park, its environmental setting, and land classification, this document provided a visitor use plan and concepts for developing and managing the area for the public. The theme of maintaining the "naturalness of the area while assuring the finest quality in recreational experience", is followed throughout this document. Subsequent to the master plan, development concept plans for proposed recreation facilities at Lost Valley, Steel Creek, Pruitt, Tyler Bend, and Buffalo Point were prepared and approved. This river use management plan is a continuation of that planning effort.

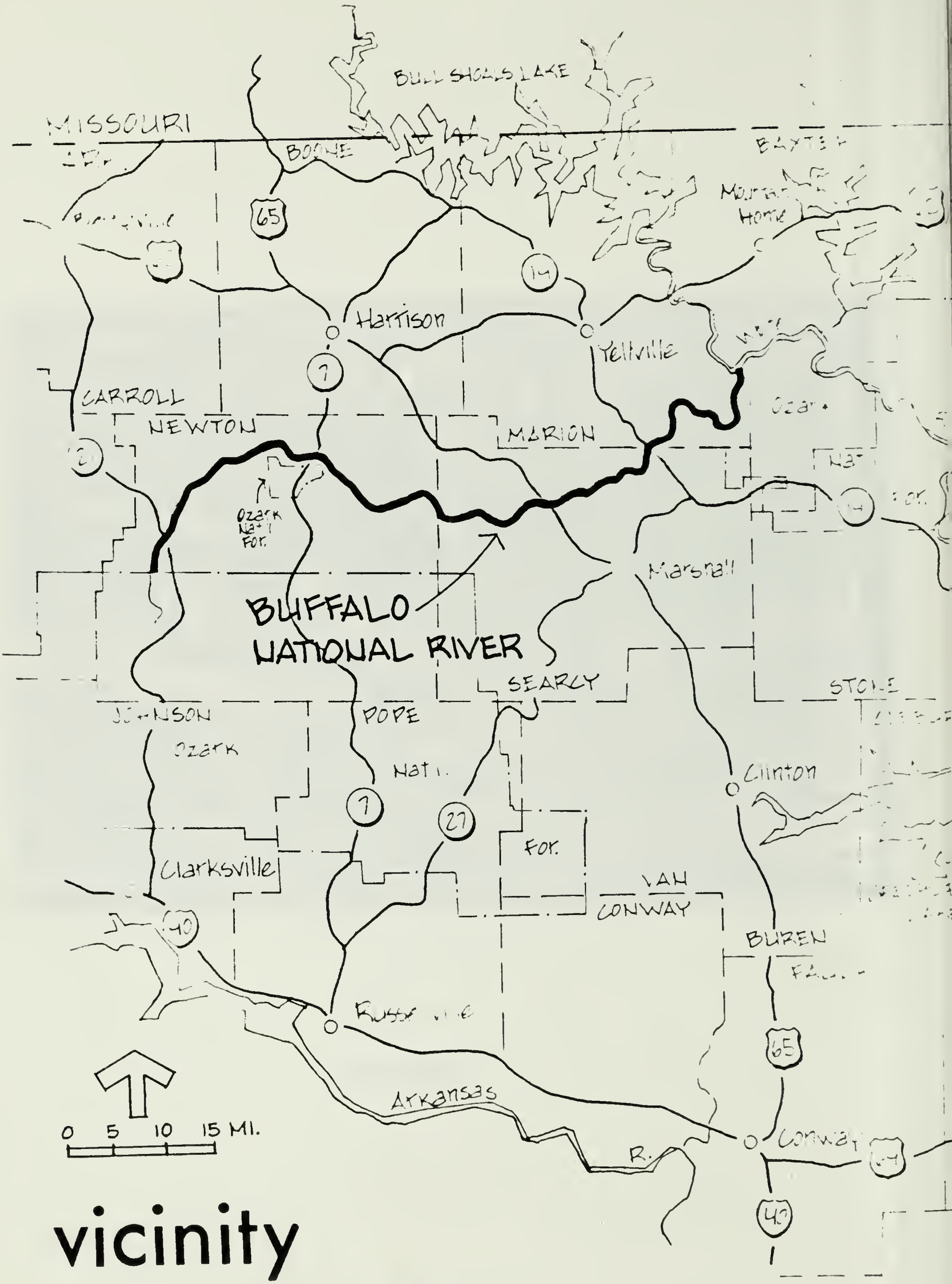
Use of the river has increased over the years as a result of publicity for the area (generally distributed by word of mouth), quality canoe and johnboat concession operations; and additional and improved access points. This increase in popularity has not been without its problems. Congestion at some river access points and campgrounds has often created conflicts between river users, lessened the quality of the experience for some, and at times damaged the resource. Inappropriate use of some areas for access has also resulted in damage to the resource.

This river use management plan discusses the existing problems associated with congestion and intensive use, recognizing that the quality of the visitor's experience diminishes and that the resource suffers damage as use of the river increases. Obtaining an acceptable mix between use of the river and preservation of the qualities for which the river has been recognized both by the general public and by Congress is the main thrust of this planning effort.

The first section of this document concerns canoe use, the major attraction and use of the river. The second section is about camping along the river, and the third section discusses access to the river.



RIVER USE



vicinity

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CANOEING

Introduction

As the following figures show, canoeing on the Buffalo has been an increasingly popular activity over the years:

1963	5,400
1977	37,400
1979	41,200
1980	28,400
1981	51,300

Since almost all of the canoes carry two passengers, the estimated number of canoeists would be twice these figures. The drop in use during 1980 is likely due to drought and low water levels. Conversely, the high use reported in 1981 is due in part to good weather and water conditions. In addition, for the first time, data received from canoe concessioners were adjusted upward (on the basis of river bank counts) to account for unrecorded or missing rental receipts.

Visitors to the Buffalo National River can experience a variety of landscape and river conditions. Also, depending on the day of the week, the season, and the section of the river being used, visitors will be affected by the number of other recreationists using the river at the same time.

As shown on the map on page 6 , the Buffalo National River is divided into three sections—the Pruitt District, (upper section), the Silver Hill District (middle section), and the Buffalo District (lower section). Canoeing is concentrated in parts of two of these districts—the Pruitt District and the Buffalo District—with most of this use on weekends.

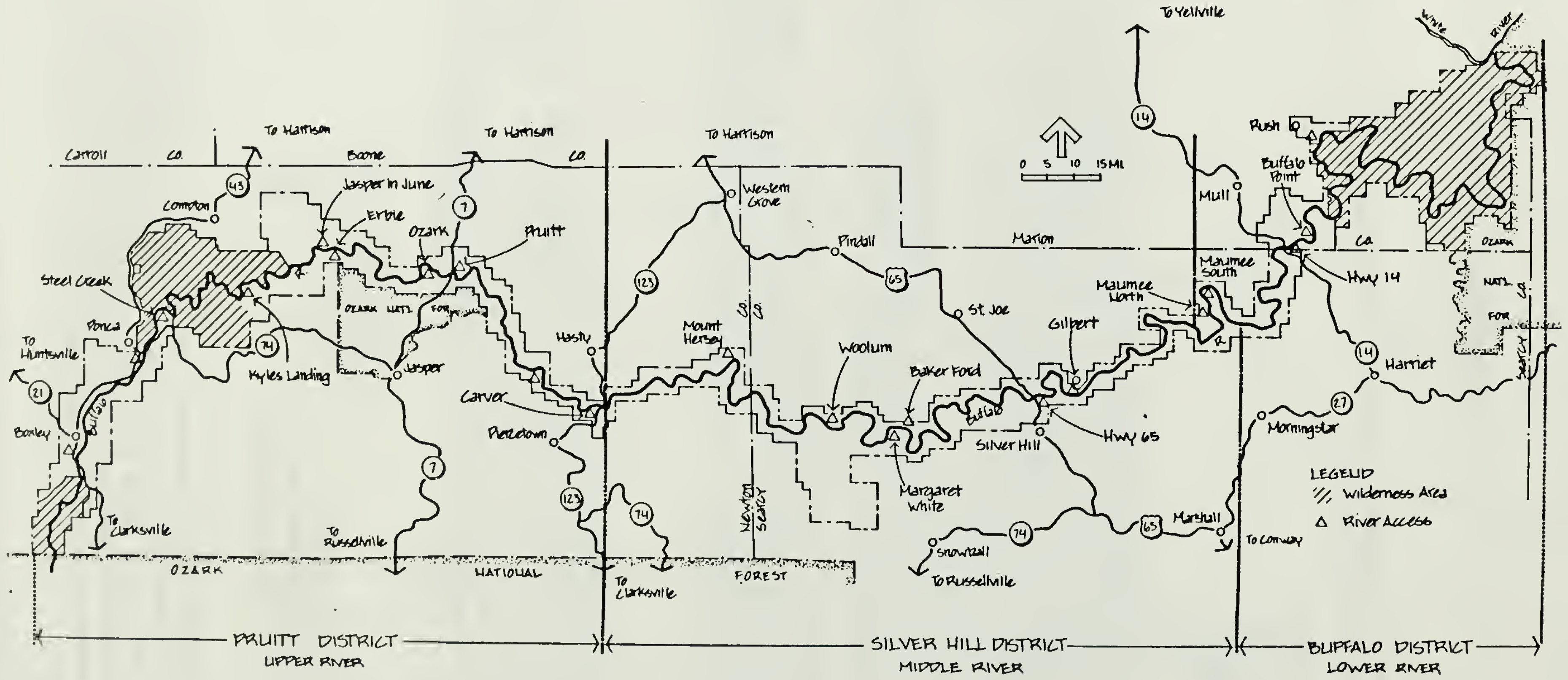
Concessions

Although the Buffalo National River was authorized in 1972, privately operated canoe rental and shuttle concessions were not regulated under the National Park Service permit system until the 1980 season. Beginning in 1978, interested parties were requested to make offers for the operation of canoe and johnboat rental services. After considerable analysis and debate, permits were issued for a total of 1250 canoes to 24 individuals, based on services provided during the 1977 season. Distribution was as follows:

	Concessioners	Canoes
Pruitt District (Upper section)	10	450
Silver Hill District (Middle section)	7	300
Buffalo Point District (Lower section)	7	500

Canoes were distributed by management district to avoid congestion on the river and minimize the impact on the environment. Although concessioners may use other districts, they must either put-in or take-out of their own district. The number of concessioners operating at the Buffalo National River has decreased due to the sale of several concession operations; however, the number of canoes has remained the same.

The permits were issued for a three-year period to allow the National Park Service



BUFFALO NATIONAL RIVER
Buffalo National River • Arkansas
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to determine through research the desired level of canoe use and to prepare this planning document. Since this plan has not been completed in sufficient time to renegotiate the existing permits, an automatic one-year time extension will be afforded all permit holders.

Pruitt District

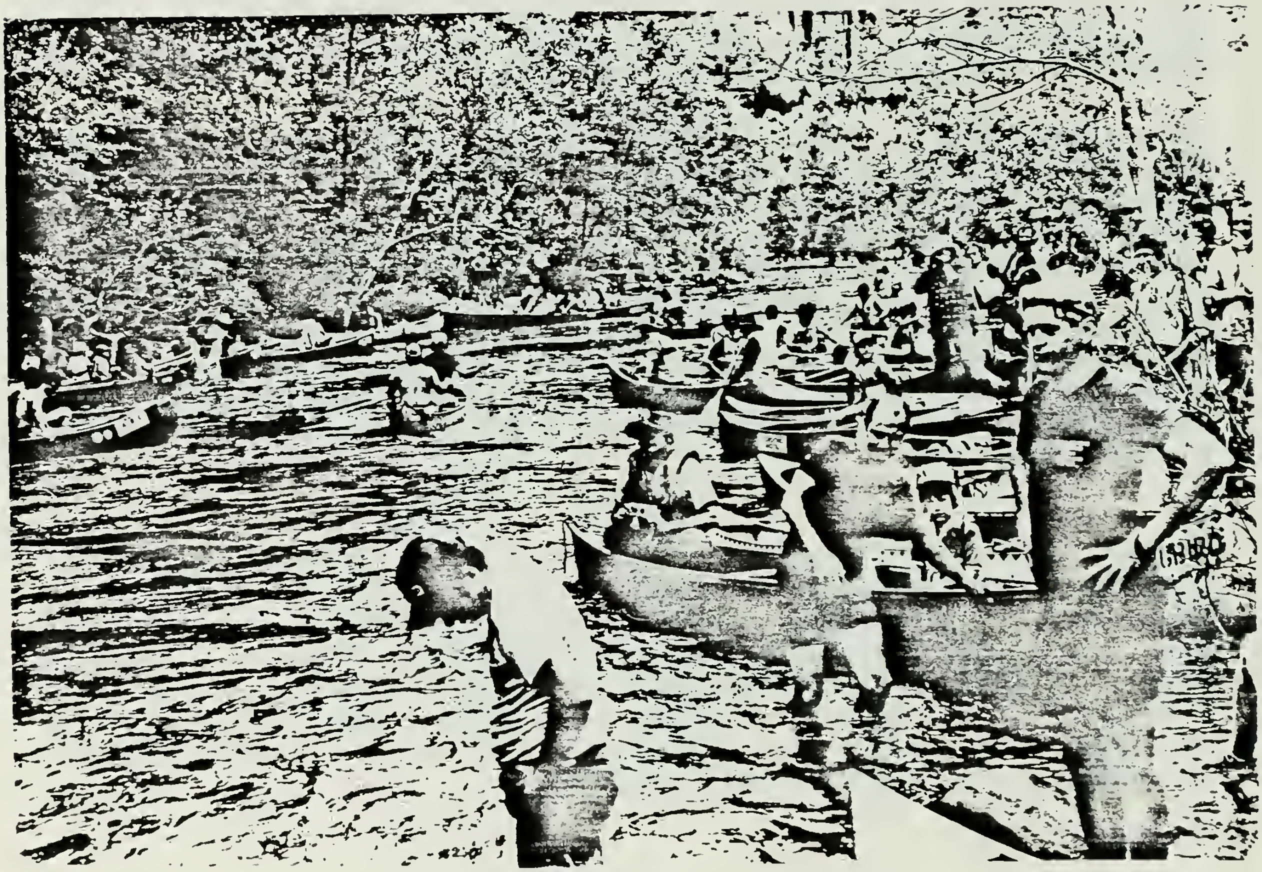
The stretch of river above Ponca is only floatable when the river is in flood stage downstream, and then only by experienced canoeists. Because of the high risks of this float, few concessioners rent canoes for this stretch. The extreme upper sections of this part of the river are within the Upper Buffalo Wilderness. The portion from Boxley to Ponca flows through the scenic Boxley Valley with small bluffs on one side and a pastoral valley on the other.

The next section of river, Ponca to Pruitt, is floatable in the spring, generally until June, with heavy use on weekends during the months of April, May, and June, depending on river conditions. Dropping at a rate of 11 feet per mile, this section offers an exciting fast water run of 24 miles which requires some canoeing skills since there are rocks and boulders as well as willows to dodge on this fast flowing section. The high bluffs and side canyon hikes to Hemmed In Hollow with its 200 ft. waterfall and the scenic Indian Creek canyon also increase this section's attractiveness to floaters. The first 12 miles of this float is through the Ponca Wilderness area. Although the river is part of the designated wilderness, recreational use of the river was recognized in the legislation as a continuing and acceptable use.

On peak weekend days, canoeists on this stretch of the river are seldom out of sight of other floaters, and on narrow chutes through rapids and at some bends, canoes must wait their turn or risk interfering with one another. The take-out at Kyles Landing following a busy float results in a large number of a canoeists camping in a small area. The close camping arrangements and the party atmosphere lead to conflicts between park visitors. High concentrations of recreationists in popular areas also cause trampling of vegetation, littering, streambank erosion, and unsanitary waste disposal.

Silver Hill District

The river in the Silver Hill District is floatable year-round except for a stretch of up to 4.5 miles below Woolum that goes completely dry beginning usually in mid-July. In the lower section, it may be necessary to drag canoes over shallow shoals in the late summer. The gradient of the river varies from 6 feet per mile between Carver and Woolum to 3 feet per mile between Gilbert and Maumee. Canoe use in the Silver Hill District is light, seldom exceeding ten canoes per mile. The stretch from Carver to Gilbert—which passes through an area marked by large, wide fields, small bluffs, and agricultural scenes is busiest from April to June. From Gilbert to Maumee, the four busiest months are May, June, July, and August.



High weekend use at Gray Rock above Kyles Landing.

Buffalo Point District

The river becomes wider in this district with numerous high bluffs, timbered land, and open fields. The two most heavily used stretches of the Buffalo National River—from Maumee to Buffalo Point and from Buffalo Point to Rush—are in this district. Buffalo Point, a popular recreation area, contains campgrounds, picnic areas, a swimming beach, cabins, food service and interpretive programs.

Concentrated use occurs from May to August with extensive, but less, use in April and September. Weekend use far exceeds that on weekdays. On busy weekends, canoes from Maumee to Rush are seldom out of sight of other canoes. At Rush Landing, there may be so many canoeists taking out that some must delay landing until earlier arrivals have beached their canoes and loaded them on vehicles.

The final leg of the Buffalo River is a 24½-mile float to the White River through the Lower Buffalo Wilderness. (The river was excepted from the designated wildernessd because of the historic use of motorized craft.) This stretch receives less use, mainly because it requires a 2-day float. The trip to Buffalo City or Norfork requires 3 hour round trip for a shuttle.

John Boating is also an important recreational activity, especially in the Buffalo District, where the vast majority of this use occurs between Rush Landing and the White River. Although data on the extent of johnboat use is limited, it is estimated that there are approximately two johnboats for every one canoe on this stretch of the river.

Statistics

The following charts and tables will provide more specific information on canoe use. The data was gathered from concessioners' rental receipts for 1981, and adjusted upward, based on actual canoe counts, to allow for unrecorded or missing receipts. Since only concession canoes were counted by this method, actual river bank counts for each river stretch were used to establish a ratio of private to rental canoes. Although these figures are estimates, they represent the best information available.

The peak days identified throughout the text and on various charts reflect the second highest number of canoes recorded for the particular river stretch and period of the week. The highest use days for each section of the river were not utilized because use on these days was often way out of proportion with use on other days.

Canoe density levels were found to be a good way for management to compare canoe use on the various river sections. Density is determined by dividing the total number of canoes recorded on a specific day by the number of river miles in the particular river stretch under consideration.

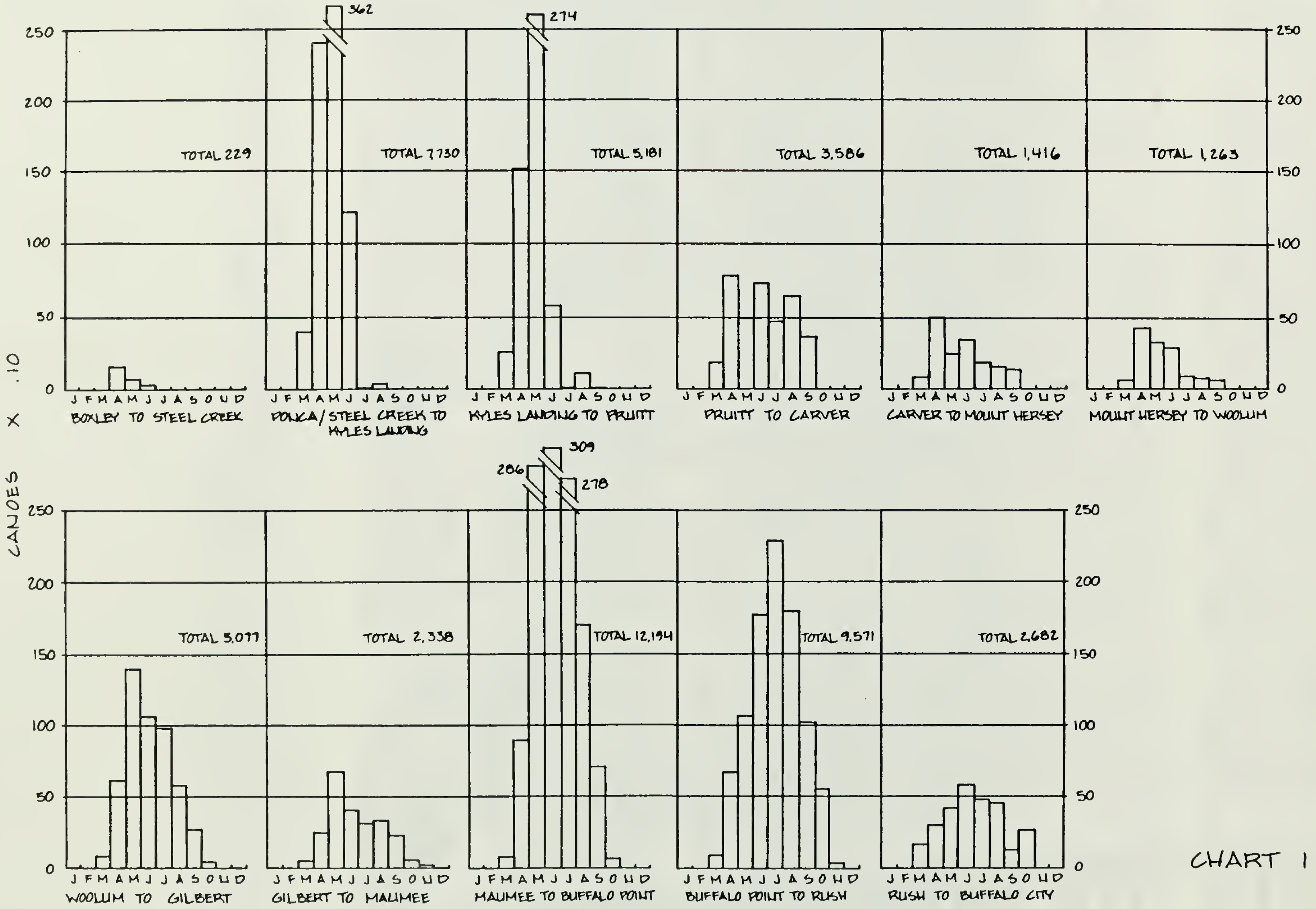
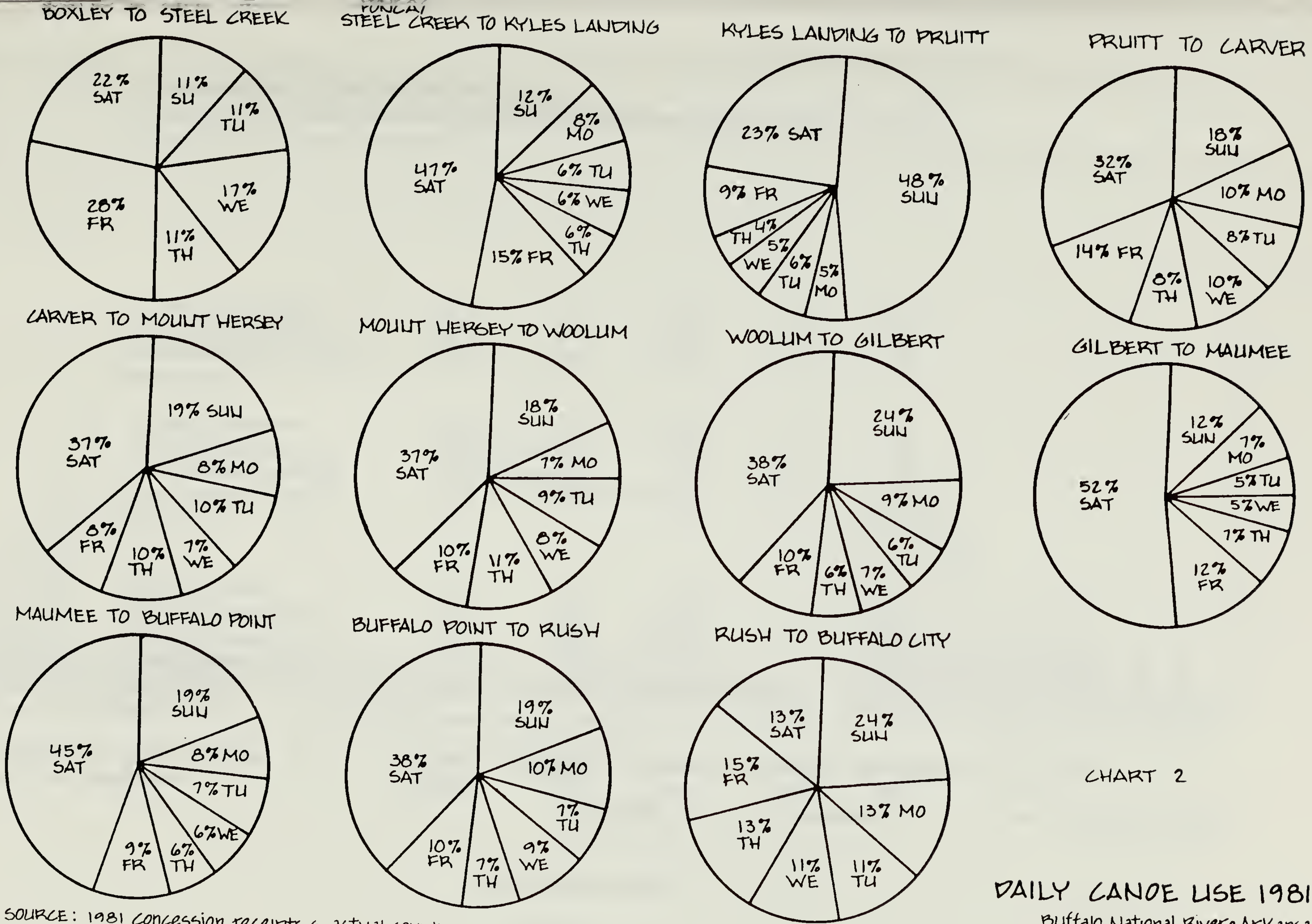


CHART 1

ANNUAL/MONTHLY CANOE USE 1981
Buffalo National River, Arkansas

SOURCE: 1981 Concession receipts & actual counts



SOURCE: 1981 concession receipts & actual counts

CHART 2

DAILY CANOE USE 1981

Buffalo National River • Arkansas

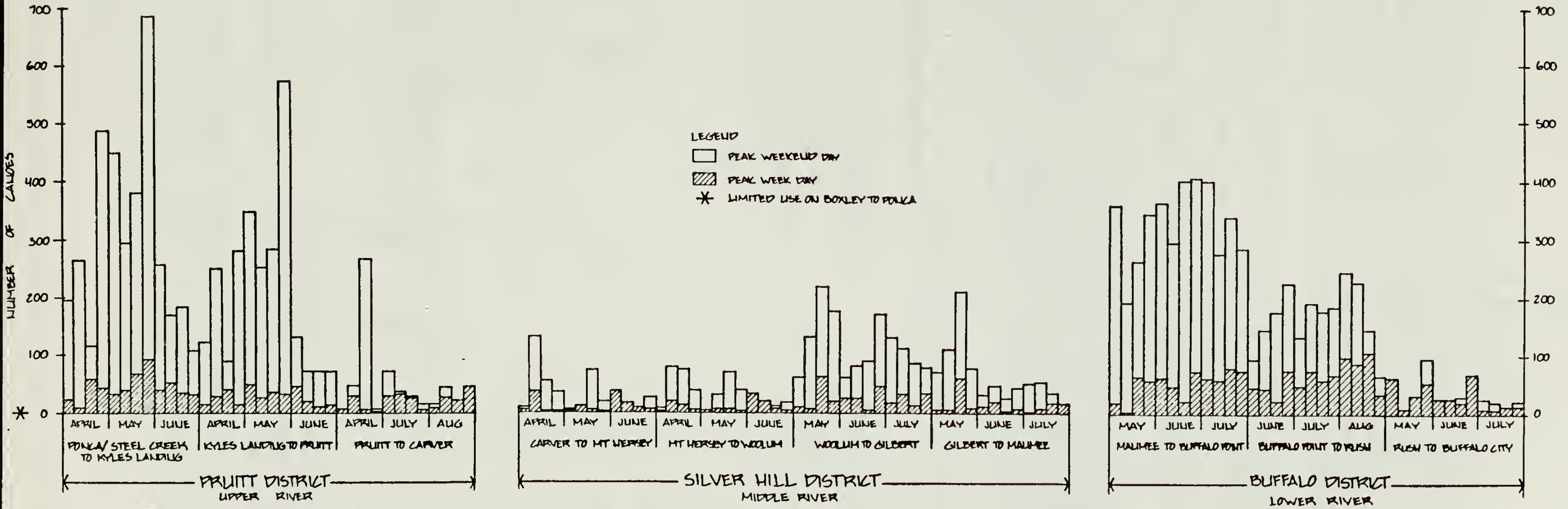
TABLE I

1981 CANOE USE

District River Section	River Miles	Weekend (1) Density	Weekend (2) Maximum	Weekday (1) Density	Weekday (2) Maximum
Pruitt					
Boxley-Ponca	6.1	3	16	3	16
Ponca/Steel Creek-Kyles Landing	10.3	48	490	6	64
Kyles Landing-Pruitt	13.2	26	348	3	44
Pruitt-Carver	11.3	6	72	3	35
Silver Hill					
Carver-Mt. Hersey	6.9	10	71	5	34
Mt. Hersey-Woolum	8.5	8	71	3	23
Woolum-Gilbert	20.7	9	176	2	44
Gilbert-Maumee	12.9	9	110	2	19
Buffalo Point					
Maumee-Buffalo Point	10.2	40	408	8	76
Buffalo Point-Rush	7.9	29	227	12	97
Rush-Buffalo City	24.3	2	40	2	60

(1) Number of canoes per mile

(2) Number of canoes recorded on selected Peak Day in 1981, determined from concession receipts and actual counts.



SOURCE: 1981 Concession receipts & actual counts

CANOE USE – PEAK DAYS 1981
Buffalo National River • Arkansas

CHART 3

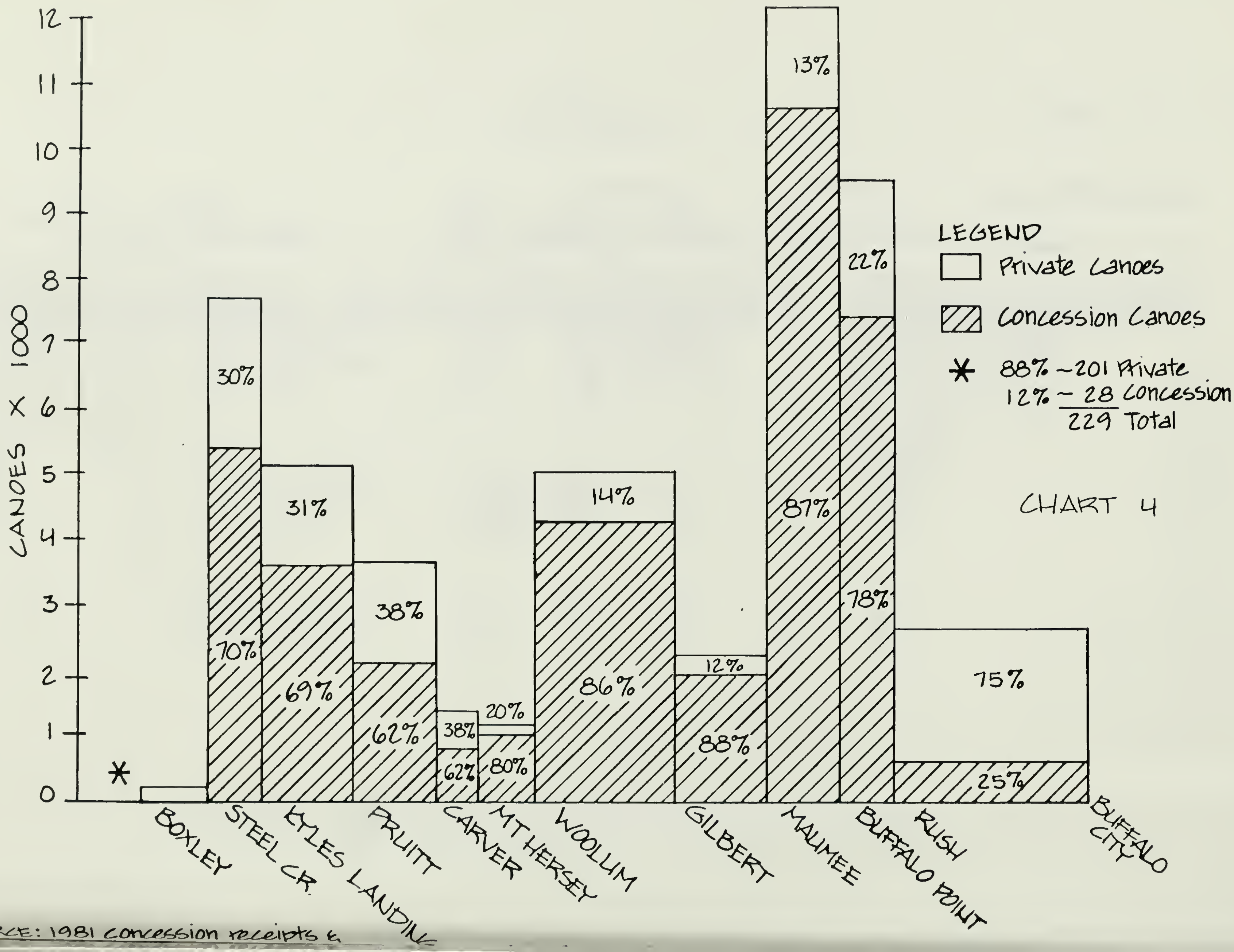


CHART 4

SOURCE: 1981 concession receipts &

Visitor Perceptions

Statistical data such as that discussed in the previous section is required to give an indication of how much the river is used. However, it does not reflect the effects on the visitor. To assist the National Park Service in assessing these impacts and provide insights that would aid in the management of the river, a two-year river recreation study was conducted by Dr. Robert B. Ditton, Department of Recreation and Parks, Texas Agricultural Experiment Station, Texas A&M University.

The lower river from Maumee to Buffalo Point and from Buffalo Point to Rush was studied during the canoeing season in 1979. During the second year of study, 1980, research was directed at the upper river, which includes the following sections: Ponca-Kyles, Kyles-Pruitt, and Pruitt-Hasty. The middle section of the river, Hasty to Maumee, receives the lowest visitation by canoeists and consequently was not included in the study.

An essential part of the study presented the perceptions and attitudes of visitors regarding crowding as it impacted their experience on the river. Of those responding in the Ditton study of the upper riveron Saturdays and Sundays during the park season (Ditton, 1981), 46.5% expressed the feeling that their enjoyment of the trip was reduced due to crowded conditions. Conversely, 53.5% of the respondents either felt that the crowds had no effect or actually increased their enjoyment. The group of 46.5% are subsequently referred to as the Crowded respondents, while the 53.5% are referred to as the Non-crowded respondents

RESPONSE	UPPER RIVER		LOWER RIVER	
	Number Respondents	%	Number Respondents	%
Greatly Reduced	35	8.5	8	2.2
Moderately Reduced	49	11.9	30	8.2
Slightly Reduced	108	26.1	62	16.8
Not at All	128	31.0	163	44.3
Slightly Increased	36	8.7	45	12.2
Moderately Increased	28	6.8	35	9.5
Greatly Increased	29	7.0	25	6.8
TOTAL	413	100.0	368	100.0

A further analysis of the above chart indicates that by excluding those whose experience was slightly reduced, 20.4% responded that their enjoyment of the trip was reduced in the upper section, while 10.4% reported the same experience for the lower section.

On most variables such as gender, age, income, marital status, and residence, there was no difference between Crowded and Non-crowded respondents. However, the Crowded respondents as a group were significantly higher in educational level as well as number of years floating rivers, number of trips per year, and number of years floating the Buffalo.

When attempting to further understand the visitors, it was found that the overwhelming majority, 87% of the Crowded respondents, were on the river either Saturday or Sunday; 76% of the Non-crowded respondents were Saturday or Sunday visitors. Also, a larger percentage of Crowded (80%) versus Non-crowded (69%) respondents were campers. Of those who took out at the earliest time, between 12:00 and 1:00 p.m., fully 70% indicated they were crowded. This may indicate that those who were most negatively impacted by the crowding were more likely to take out early. Of course, the study could not include potential visitors who stayed home to avoid the crowds.

As might be expected, the Crowded respondents' motives for taking a trip were somewhat different from those of the Non-crowded respondents. The Crowded respondents rated more highly a desire to escape every day pressures and seek peace and calm. The Non-crowded respondents placed less importance on a natural experience and were more interested in social contact.

Overall satisfaction levels of both groups were relatively high; however, the Non-crowded group did indicate a significantly higher level of satisfaction. The respondents indicated overwhelmingly that they were pleased with the job being done by the park managers and that they thought the river and its surroundings were in good condition. Also, the respondents indicated their support for restrictions on river use when necessary to avoid environmental damage or crowding. Approximately 80% desired some control on use with more support for high restrictions on river use among the weekend visitors. The ratio of those in favor of high restrictions to those in favor of low restrictions was approximately two to one on the weekends while for weekday visitors the ratio was reversed.

When comparing the upper and lower river sections, it was found that 43% of the upper river respondents indicated that the crowds negatively impacted their experience while only 22% of the lower river group expressed this sentiment. Looking only at Saturday and Sunday users, 47% on the upper Buffalo River and 27% on the lower river were negatively impacted by the crowds. The upper river visitors felt significantly more crowded at the put-in points than did those on the lower river.

On the upper river, the highest percentage of Crowded respondents occurred when 126-150 canoes were recorded on a particular river section. Beyond this level, there was a slight drop in the crowded percentage. This could indicate that beyond a certain level, those who are most likely to be negatively impacted by crowding are finding other places for their activity. The Ditton study did not investigate the level of displacement that has taken place over the years at the Buffalo.

In conclusion, the Ditton research indicated that while both the upper and lower river users were generally satisfied with their experience, those on the upper river and to a greater extent on weekends were negatively impacted by the crowds. Furthermore, they were less satisfied with the management of the upper river than the lower river.

CAMPING

Introduction

Camping has been an important part of all previous planning at Buffalo National River. The Final Master Plan designated locations for "primitive camping" primarily to coincide with a leisurely 1-day float 8-12 miles apart where roads cross the river or where existing roads provide access. Facilities provided at such areas are minimal: access roads and parking areas, basic sanitary facilities, a source of potable water, a limited number of fire grates, and possibly a limited number of tables. Facilities are either above the floodplain or are capable of withstanding occasional flooding.

There are a number of important reasons for designating camp sites:

1. Visitor Safety. When flooding threatens, management attempts to warn campers by going to designated camping areas. Visitors camping on gravel bars and other non-designated sites are very difficult to reach and may not be warned of the impending danger. Management has previously proposed that camping be limited to designated areas; however, public opinion has been negative toward this proposal. Drinking water is now available at some camping areas and will eventually be provided at all areas. This reduces the possibility of disease transmitted through contaminated river water or water from springs.

2. Resource Protection. Visitors camped on gravel bars and river banks do not have sanitary facilities available and must be relied upon to properly dispose of human waste. At low levels of use, properly disposed human waste is not an environmental problem. As visitor use rises, unsanitary and unhealthy conditions can become prevalent, especially at popular sites.

3. Management. Important visitor services can be more easily provided at designated areas. Vault toilets are provided and pumped regularly to remove human waste. Trash is regularly picked up. Potable water will eventually be available at all areas. Interpretive services may also be provided. Maintenance, resource management, and law enforcement efforts can be concentrated at a few accessible sites instead of numerous, often inaccessible camping locations spread out over the length of the river. Isolated campers may not receive these services at all.

Density

Many factors influence the quality of a campsite and a camping experience: the physical setting, the relationship of the campsite to the recreational resource, the design, the availability and accessibility of sanitary facilities and drinking water, and proximity of the campsites to one another. This last factor is called density and can be quantified as the number of campsites or camping units per acre. Density figures enable management to look at existing or proposed areas and estimate the number of camping units that area will support.

In 1970, the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation published "Outdoor Recreation Space Standards." In this report camping density standards for various federal, state, and local agencies ranged from 2 campsites per acre to about 17. Looking at a real example, the developed campground at Buffalo Point contains 100 recreational

High weekend use at Kyles Landing.

vehicle (RV) campsites and 23 tent campsites. The total acreage of the campground is approximately 30. Therefore, the density of that particular campground is about 4.1 campsites per acre ($^{123}/30 = 4.1$). This figure is somewhat misleading, however, because nearly half of the acreage is taken up with support facilities such as roads, trails, pavilions, parking lots, an amphitheater, natural and man-made drainages, and a visitor contact station. Adensity level of 4.1 camping units per acre is still a useful standard because all proposed camping areas will have support facilities and natural features that preclude development.

If all camping areas at Buffalo National River were to be developed to a density standard of 4.1 units per acre and each camping unit serves an average of four persons, the number of campsites at each area and the maximum number of visitors to be accommodated would be approximately these indicated in Table I.

TABLE 2

	Acres	Potential Camping Units (1)	Maximum No. of Visitors Accom.(2)
Steel Creek	33	135.3	541
Kyle's Landing (3)	16	65.6	262
Erbie	3	12.3	49
Ozark	11	45.1	180
Hasty	11	45.1	180
Carver	16	65.6	262
Mt. Hersey	6	24.6	98
Woolum	19	77.9	312
Margaret White	50	205.0	820
Tyler Bend	60	246.0	984
Plumfield	7	28.7	115
Maumee South	9	36.0	144
Buffalo Point (4)	30	123.0	492
Rush	7	28.7	115

1) Obtained by multiplying acres times 4.1 units per acre
2) Obtained by multiplying potential camping units times 4 people per unit.
3) Only about 10 acres is presently in public ownership.
4) Existing camping units at a developed campground.

The maximum number of visitors to be accommodated can then be compared to the actual number of canoeists using the river. On a peak weekend day (based on the second highest day in 1981), 490 canoes or 980 persons floated the river from Ponca/Steel Creek to Kyles Landing. According to the Ditton study, 73% (716 individuals) of the floaters camped, and of this number 50% (358 individuals) camped at Kyles Landing. Assuming four persons for each camping unit, 90 units would be required on that peak weekend day to properly accommodate visitors. The desired camping density level at Kyles Landing was exceeded on the selected peak weekend days in 1981 by approximately 96 individuals or 25 camping units. This high density level presently occurs only at Kyles Landing. However, as canoeing increases, more and more people will be using a fixed number of acres for camping.

Developing camping areas at higher densities than indicated in Table 2 may make campgrounds so overcrowded that more people will camp on gravel bars. This would be contrary to current management philosophies and would create visitor safety, resource protection, and National Park Service management problems.

Developing more camping areas might serve visitors, but this action would also create management problems, especially in times of austere budgets and limited personnel ceilings.

Another trap to avoid is developing one camping area to its full potential when the next camping area downstream will not support the same level of use. An example is Steel Creek with 33 acres and a potential of 135.3 camping units. This area is used on Friday nights before visitors begin their weekend float. On Saturday night, visitors are at Kyles Landing, an area less than half (16 acres) the size of Steel Creek.

Planning for campgrounds is a complex issue, and more information is needed on visitors' camping habits before solutions to current and potential problems can be found.

RIVER ACCESS

A variety of recreational activities occur on and along the river in addition to the ever popular canoeing. They include swimming, fishing, picnicking, camping, and to a lesser degree johnboating, hiking, nature study, sightseeing, hunting, and horseback riding. The majority of these activities occur, originate, and/or terminate at access sites. These access sites are located at major and minor road crossings with recreational development ranging from minimal to extensive. They are:

Pruitt District

- Boxley Bridge
- Ponca Bridge
- Steel Creek Recreation Area
- Kyles Landing
- Jasper In June
- Erbie
- Ozark Campground
- Pruitt-Upper & Lower Areas
- Hasty Launch Area
- Hasty Low Water Bridge
- Carver

Silver Hill District

- Mt. Hersey
- Woolum
- Margaret White
- Baker Ford
- Highway 65
- Gilbert
- Maumee-South

Buffalo District

- Maumee-North
- Highway 14 Bridge
- Buffalo Point Campground
- Rush Recreation Area

In addition to these sites, there are numerous low use, unimproved river access sites throughout the entire river corridor. These sites are generally characterized as having poor to extremely poor road conditions, and many are only accessible with four wheel drive vehicles. Use is generally very low, with no recreational facilities.

Many of these sites have been used for years, providing appropriate recreational opportunities for numerous individuals for a variety of recreational pursuits. Other sites, however, are not necessarily serving the needs of the public. These sites are usually created by off-road vehicles, and may be relatively new. They may be used by only a few individuals for brief periods during the year, but this use often results in or has the potential to result in damage to the resource and/or conflict with other park visitors and adjacent land owners. These sites may also be within a short distance of other sites that provide identical or similar recreational opportunities.

Some low use river access sites that are in designated wilderness areas will be closed as provided for in Public Law 95-625. Sites outside of wilderness areas are, however, remaining open for further resource damage and conflicts with adjacent landowners and park users.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

The Buffalo River country has some of the most beautiful scenery in the eastern half of the United States. The scenery and the other natural and historical features of the Buffalo National River stir our higher senses and feelings about this unique river valley. The goals of river management are to 1) protect the river environment and 2) to provide a quality visitor experience in close contact with these resources.

Current use of the river is not causing permanent environmental damage. Any substantial increase in use involving canoeing, camping, or inappropriate and unnecessary utilization of low use river access sites could, however, lead to environmental damage and threats to cultural and natural resources.

Regarding visitor experience, quality for some people involves relative isolation. For others, a moderate number of other visitors is acceptable, and the social interaction increases their enjoyment. River management should provide for both types of visitors—individuals desiring a quiet canoe trip or fishing in the wild and groups of people experiencing the joy of floating together on a Sunday afternoon. People who fish are also significant users of Buffalo National River, and it is important to provide a quality fishing environment for the local fishermen and for those who travel miles to test their skills in this wild and natural river so well known for smallmouth bass. Unfortunately canoeists and fishermen generally don't mix.

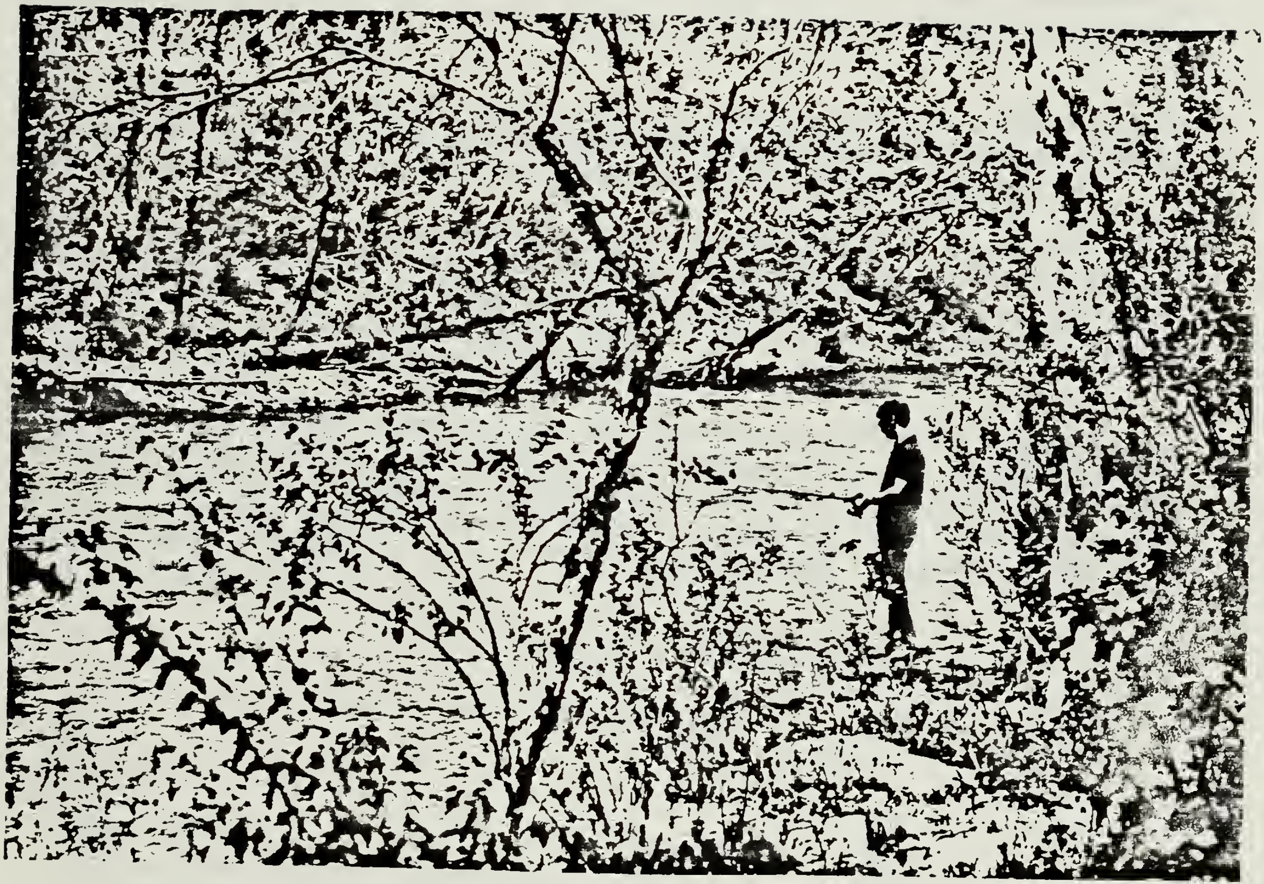
Low and moderate, even high, canoe use is compatible with a quality experience on the Buffalo; and the 1981 use levels, although disturbing to some visitors on popular stretches of the river during peak times of the year, can be accommodated. Crowding and congestion which would result in increased accidents or significantly diminish the opportunities for visitors to set their own pace, feel the peacefulness of the river environment, and appreciate the beauty of the high bluffs and the delicacy of the fern falls, are unacceptable. Urban densities are appropriate in many recreational settings, but not along the Buffalo.

Conversely, it is not realistic to plan for a pure wilderness experience along the river. In years to come, hikers may enjoy a few days in one of the Buffalo's wilderness areas with "outstanding opportunities for solitude," but such an experience for a canoeist has been essentially lost by the existing developments along the river, the road crossings, the established motor boat use (with 10 hp limitation) in the lower river, and the relatively fast trip and high numbers of people on the upper river in the spring.

It is realistic, however, to plan for a near-wilderness or remote area experience. By choosing the right section of the river on the right day at the right time, visitors can enjoy the river virtually all to themselves. The National Park Service intends to manage the river in such a way that this remote area experience is always available for the visitor who will make advance plans. At present, canoeists who put in just as the sun comes up or wait until early afternoon to launch generally avoid other visitors.

Even on those sections of the river which presently have moderate or high use, fishermen and others seeking a degree of solitude can use these sections frequently in the fall and winter and occasionally on weekdays in the spring and summer by coming early or very late in the day.

The following proposal and alternatives provide a range of approaches that management may take toward visitor use.



PROPOSAL AND ALTERNATIVES

PROPOSAL

Canoeing

Under the proposal, selected sections of the river will be managed for designated canoe densities allowing visitors to experience the Buffalo National River at low, moderate, and high levels of use. The three levels are defined as:

Low: Canoeists may experience the quiet solitude of the river, encountering relatively few other floaters, if any. Fishing opportunities are enhanced. (Density up to 8 canoes per mile.)

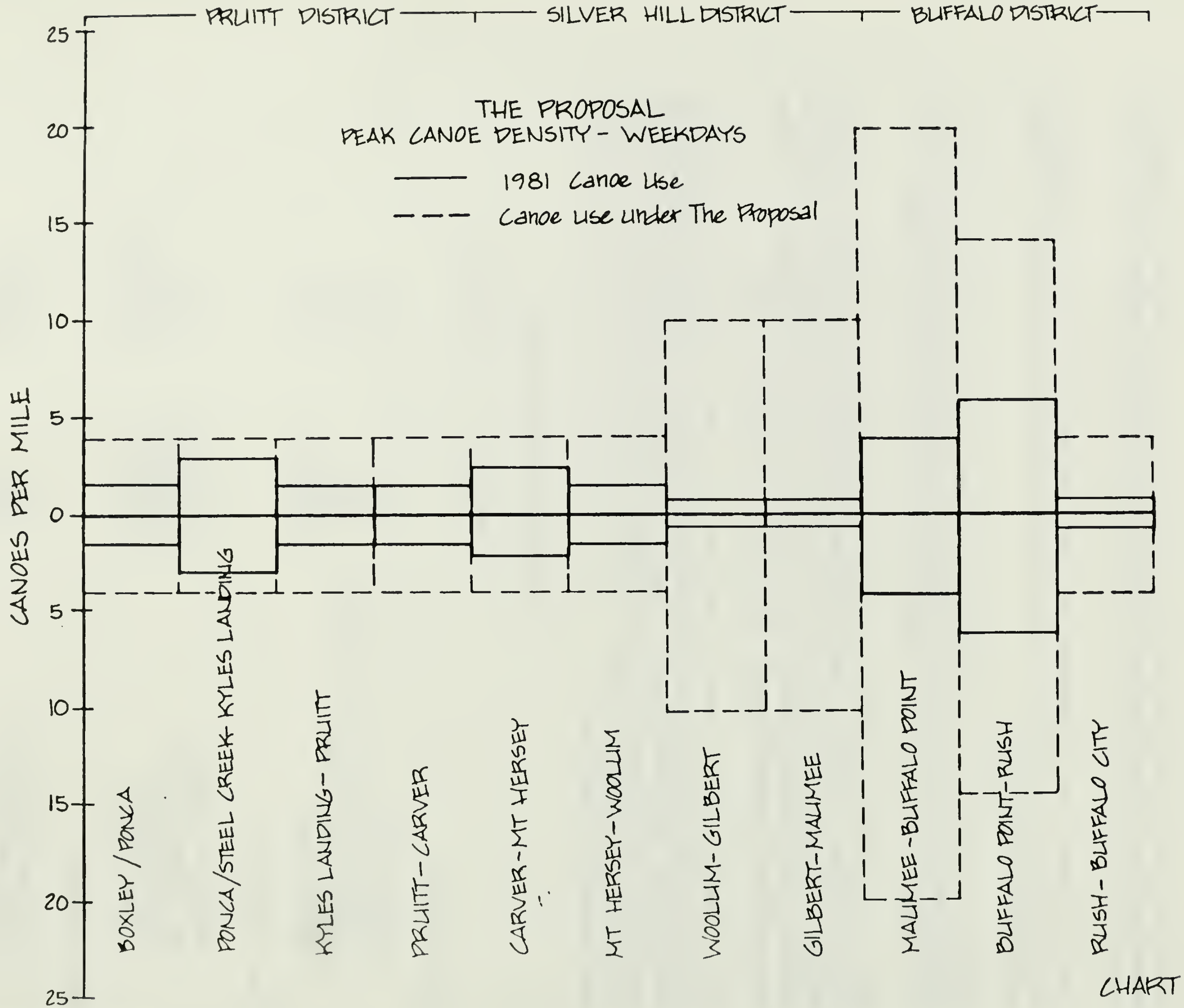
Moderate: Canoeists may encounter numerous other floaters; however, delays at launch sites and extensive use of designated camping areas would occur only rarely. Fishing opportunities are good. (Density between 9 and 20 canoes per mile.)

High: Canoeists may encounter many other floaters, most of whom will be in groups of seven or more. Use of designated camping areas will often approach capacity. Delays at launch sites and at rapids can be expected to occur on Saturdays and Sundays during good weather and water conditions. Fishing opportunities are generally poor. (Density over 21 canoes per mile.)

The proposed maximum levels of use for each river section for weekend days (Friday, Saturday, Sunday, and Monday) and weekdays (Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday) are identified below. These levels are at or above the use levels experienced during peak days (second highest use-day for each river section for weekends and weekdays) in 1981. Arrows indicate where the proposed maximum level exceeds the 1981 level.

PROPOSED LEVELS OF USE

	Weekend	Weekday
Pruitt District		
Boxley-Ponca	Low	Low
Ponca/Steel Creek-Kyles Landing	High	Low
Kyles Landing-Pruitt	High	Low
Pruitt Carver	Moderate ↑	Low
Silver Hill District		
Carver-Mt. Hersey	Moderate ↑	Low
Mt. Hersey-Woolum	Moderate ↑	Low
Woolum-Gilbert	Moderate ↑	Moderate ↑
Gilbert-Maumee	Moderate ↑	Moderate ↑
Buffalo District		
Maumee-Buffalo Point	High	High ↑
Buffalo Point-Rush	High	High ↑
Rush-Buffalo City	Low	Low


PRUITT DISTRICT
SILVER HILL DISTRICT
BUFFALO DISTRICT
THE PROPOSAL
PEAK CANOE DENSITY - WEEKDAYS
1981 Canoe Use
Canoe Use under The Proposal
CANOES PER MILE
25
20
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10
5
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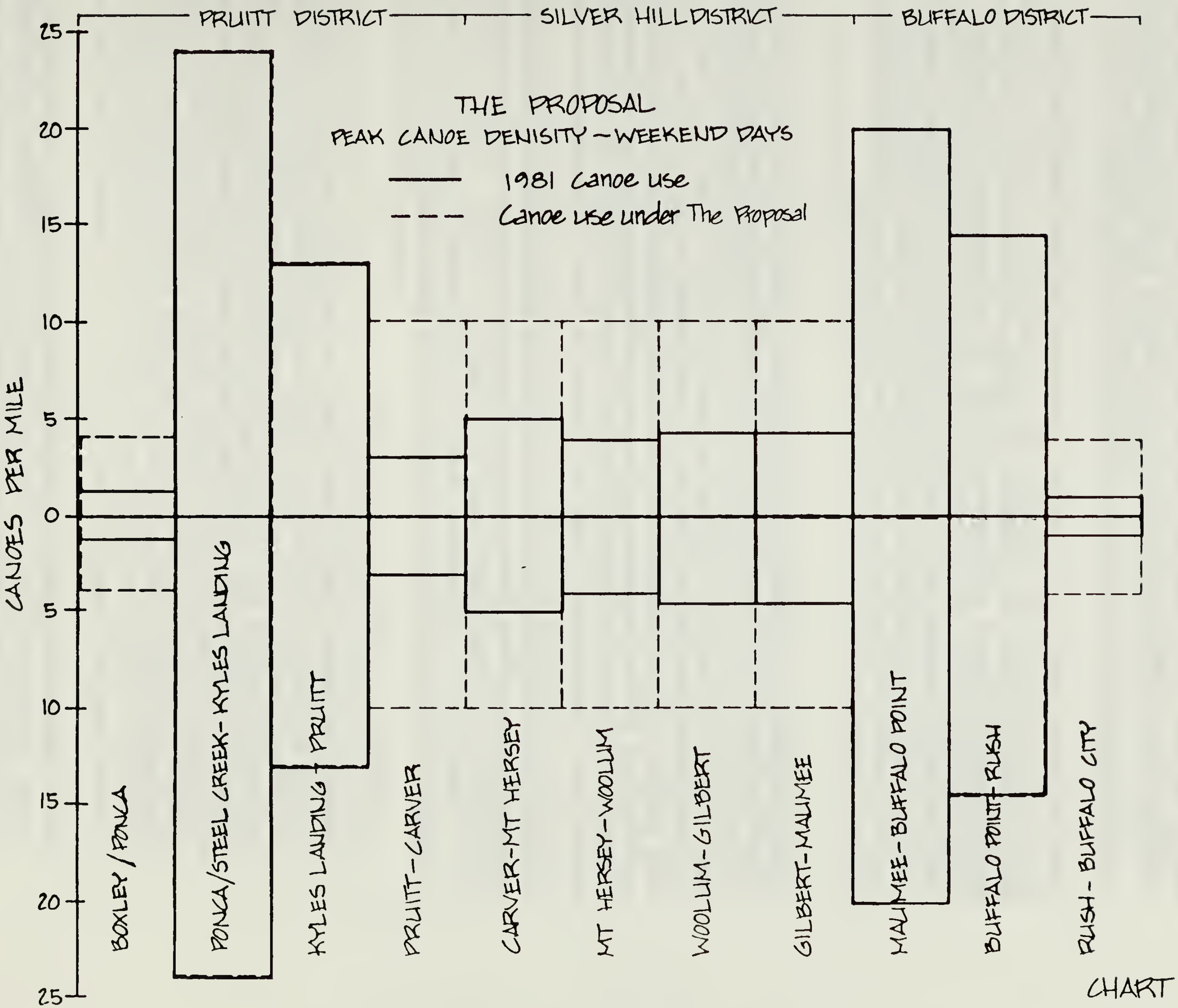
BOXLEY / PONCA
PONCA/STEEL CREEK-KYLES LANDING
KYLES LANDING- PRUITT
PRUITT- CARVER
CARVER-MT HERSEY
MT HERSEY-WOOLUM
WOOLUM-GILBERT
GILBERT-MAUMEE
MAUMEE-BUFFALO POINT
BUFFALO POINT-RUSH
RUSH- BUFFALO CITY

CHART 5


PRUITT DISTRICT
SILVER HILL DISTRICT
BUFFALO DISTRICT
THE PROPOSAL
PEAK CANOE DENISITY – WEEKEND DAYS
1981 Canoe use
Canoe use under The Proposal
CANOES PER MILE
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BOXLEY / PONCA
PONCA/STEEL CREEK - KYLES LANDING
KYLES LANDING - PRUITT
PRUITT – CARVER
CARVER - MT HERSEY
MT HERSEY - WOOLUM
WOOLUM - GILBERT
GILBERT - MAUMEE
MAUMEE - BUFFALO POINT
BUFFALO POINT - RUSH
RUSH - BUFFALO CITY

CHART 6

A ceiling for daily canoe use on the Buffalo National River, based on the above desired use levels, is determined by multiplying the maximum number of canoes per mile (8 for low use and 20 for moderate use) by the number of river miles of the individual river section. This information is contained in Charts 5 & 6. Although the ceiling has been established well above 1981 use levels for some other river sections, frequent use at these levels in most cases is considered highly unlikely. The proposed ceiling for river sections that received high use, over 20 canoes per mile, will remain at that level.

Once the desired level of use or ceiling is exceeded 4-6 times in one year, a permit system will be implemented, depending upon the availability of funds. The permit system would, however, be preceded by implementation of restrictions on time period and use of put-in and take-out points by concessioners. If the ratio of private to concession canoes identified in Chart 4 remains relatively the same as in 1981, the permit system would be designed to control further expansion of private use. If however, concession canoes represented a greater share of use on a particular section of river than occurred in 1981, further restrictions on time period and use of access points by concessioners would be implemented.

Prior to initiation of a permit system (authorized under 36 CFR Part II Section 2.6), management would carefully study different approaches. A system presently envisioned would provide for distribution of some of the permits in advance of the float date on a first-come, first-serve basis by either writing to or visiting a Buffalo National River Office. This would accommodate those who have to make plans well in advance of their trip or who desire guaranteed access to a specific section of the river. The remaining permits would be available on a first-come, first-serve basis at the particular launch site on the desired day of the float. These permits would accommodate those who decide to make a float trip with little advance notice, generally as a result of good weather and water conditions. Those not able to obtain a permit under either procedure would be able to float another section of the river. For those desiring to fish on river sections that fall under the permit system, an annual permit would be available.

The proposed use levels were based on the following considerations:

Ponca/Steel Creek/Kyles Landing/Pruitt

This section, used mostly in the spring, has reached its carrying capacity. Visitor use levels are in the high range on nice weekends. On a few days a significant number of people feel overcrowded (Ditton study), there is too much congestion at the launch areas, and visitation closely approaches the limits for visitor safety. Prohibiting use beyond existing levels on weekends, encouraging visitors to float lower on the upper river or float at less busy periods, and opening a campground at Erbie should lessen canoeing and camping densities.

Pruitt/Carver/Mt. Hersey/Woolum

This 27-mile section has traditionally received very little use during the week. Visitors putting in at Pruitt on Tuesday can have the river pretty much to themselves, and fishermen are not bothered by too many canoeists floating by. This section of the river will be designated for low use on the weekdays and moderate on the weekend. At present, weekend use from Pruitt to Carver is generally light, and if more visitors choose to float this section on weekends, the density above Pruitt would be reduced.

Woolum/Gilbert/Maumee

Use is generally light at present. Visitor demand should increase when Tyler Bend is developed. Use would be allowed to rise considerably over present levels but would be capped in the moderate range of 10 to 15 canoes per mile.

Maumee/Buffalo Point/Rush

Present use is in the high range on weekends and low to moderate on weekdays. No increases are in order at present on weekends because the launch facilities are inadequate for the present use. However, as visitor demand increases with the development of the proposed Highway 14 campground and improvement of existing launch facilities, an increase in use will be allowed.

Rush to Buffalo City

This section is traditionally a lowuse area due to the lack of access. If use rises above the targeted density of up to 10 boats per mile, a permit system would be implemented.

If future conditions warrant, concessions on the middle and lower rivers may be allowed a slight increase in allotted canoes. Because the upper river is already at its desired use level, no increases in canoes are expected for the upper river concessioners. The number of johnboats allowed appears to be adequate, and no change is recommended.

The National Park Service has the authority and responsibility to approve or disapprove proposed transfers of concession permits based on the need to protec the public interest. Because it may be in the public interest to increase or decrease the number of canoes allotted to each concessioner, the National Park Service does not guarantee that all allotted canoes held by a company may be transferred to another company.

Having observed the workings of the canoe concessioners, it appears that healthy competition and better visitor service result from having a number of businesses renting canoes. A wide variety of locations make the renting of canoes easier for visitors. On the other hand, having a very small number of canoes makes cost-efficiency questionable for the operator. Also, a large number of concession operations make overview by park management costly. Therefore, if the question arises in the future, the National Park Service may not approve any proposed transfer which would result in less than three concessioners per district or any concessioner owning more than 50% of the canoes available in any district. Also, the National Park Service may not approve a transfer resulting in a concessioner having less than 40 canoes.

In addition to the proposal, the following already approved actions will be implemented or expedited:

Inform the public about the experiences available on the different river sections at different periods of the week and season and on proper use of the park through pamphlets, concessioners, and park information stations. The news media—including newspapers, magazines, radio, and television—will also be utilized.

Improve access points and recreation facilities where appropriate. Increase enforcement of park regulations in order to reduce conflicts between park visitors.

Annually, conduct visitor surveys of floater perceptions, record attendance data, and monitor impacts on the river environment so that management can adjust canoe use levels as needed to protect the resource and provide a quality recreational experience for the public.

Camping

To obtain a quality camping experience which provides for visitor safety and enjoyment, resource protection, and proper management of facilities and people, visitors will be encouraged to camp at designated sites. In addition, campers will be encouraged to utilize less crowded designated sites in order to relieve pressure at locations such as Kyles Landing. This will be accomplished through a public information program involving park personnel, concessioners, and various elements of the news media. Camping will continue to be permitted on gravel bars, islands, and other undeveloped areas. Visitors will be warned, through park literature and signs, of dangers to life and property during flooding.

Management will closely monitor visitors' camping habits to ascertain whether existing designated sites should be expanded or new ones developed, and whether restrictions on camping are necessary.

River Access

Under the proposal, the following criteria will be utilized in assessing the appropriateness and need of low use access sites:

—Extensive past use

—Adequacy for the intended use

—Lack of or limited potential for environmental damage (erosion, litter/dumping, and disturbance of wildlife and archeological, historical, and natural sites).

—Lack of or limited potential for conflict with other users and/or adjacent landowners.

—Lack of or limited potential for adverse impacts on the character of the river.

ALTERNATIVE I

Under this NO ACTION alternative, the present policy of limiting numbers of canoes allotted to each concessioner would continue. Private use would remain uncontrolled. Mitigating measures such as those identified in the proposal would not be implemented or expedited.

Camping at designated sites or along the river corridor would continue as at present.

The present policy of permitting vehicular access to numerous formal and informal river access sites would continue. Closures of low use access sites would be implemented only occasionally, after evidence of significant environmental damage or conflict. No standarized criteria would be established.

ALTERNATIVE II

Under this alternative, a canoe use limit would be established below 1981 use levels for those sections that received high use on weekends (a density of over 21 canoes per mile) during the 1981 season.

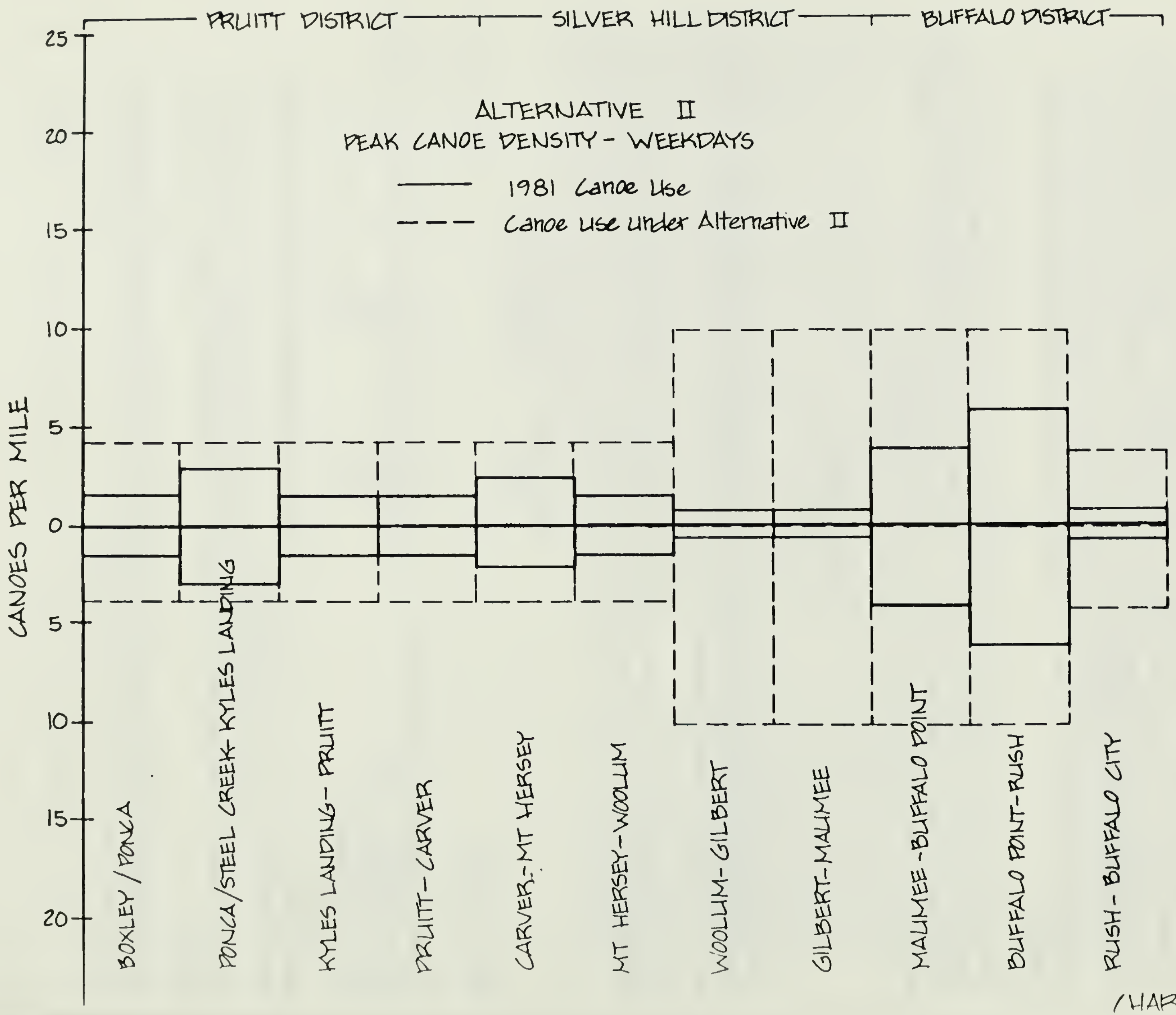
The sections identified below would be limited to a moderate density level of 20 canoes per mile.

River Stretch	1981 Density Level	Alternative II Density Level
Ponca/Steel Creek-Kyles Landing	48	20
Kyles Landing - Pruitt	26	20
Maumee-Buffalo Point	40	20
Buffalo Point-Rush	29	20

Use levels for all other sections of the river and on weekdays for all sections would be as identified in Charts 7 and 8.

The improvement of camping at designated sites would occur as in the proposal.

The assessment of low use river access sites under specific criteria, as identified in the proposal, would also be accomplished.


PRUITT DISTRICT
SILVER HILL DISTRICT
BUFFALO DISTRICT
ALTERNATIVE II
PEAK CANOE DENSITY - WEEKDAYS
1981 Canoe Use
Canoe use under Alternative II
CANOES PER MILE
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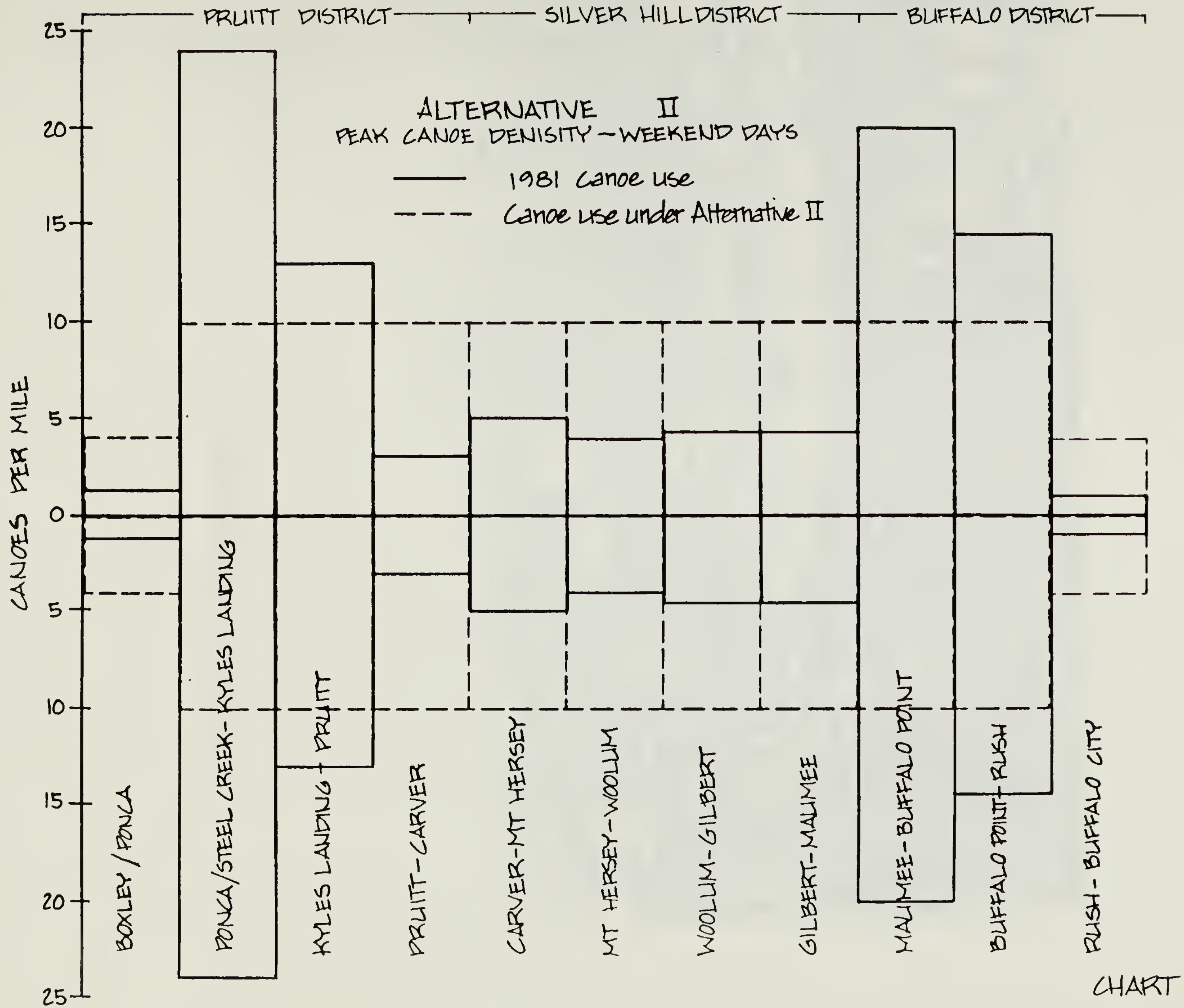
BOXLEY / PONCA
PONCA/STEEL CREEK-KYLES LANDING
KYLES LANDING- PRUITT
PRUITT- CARVER
CARVER- MT HERSEY
MT HERSEY-WOOLUM
WOOLUM- GILBERT
GILBERT-MALUMEE
MALUMEE -BUFFALO POINT
BUFFALO POINT-RUSH
RUSH - BUFFALO CITY

CHART 7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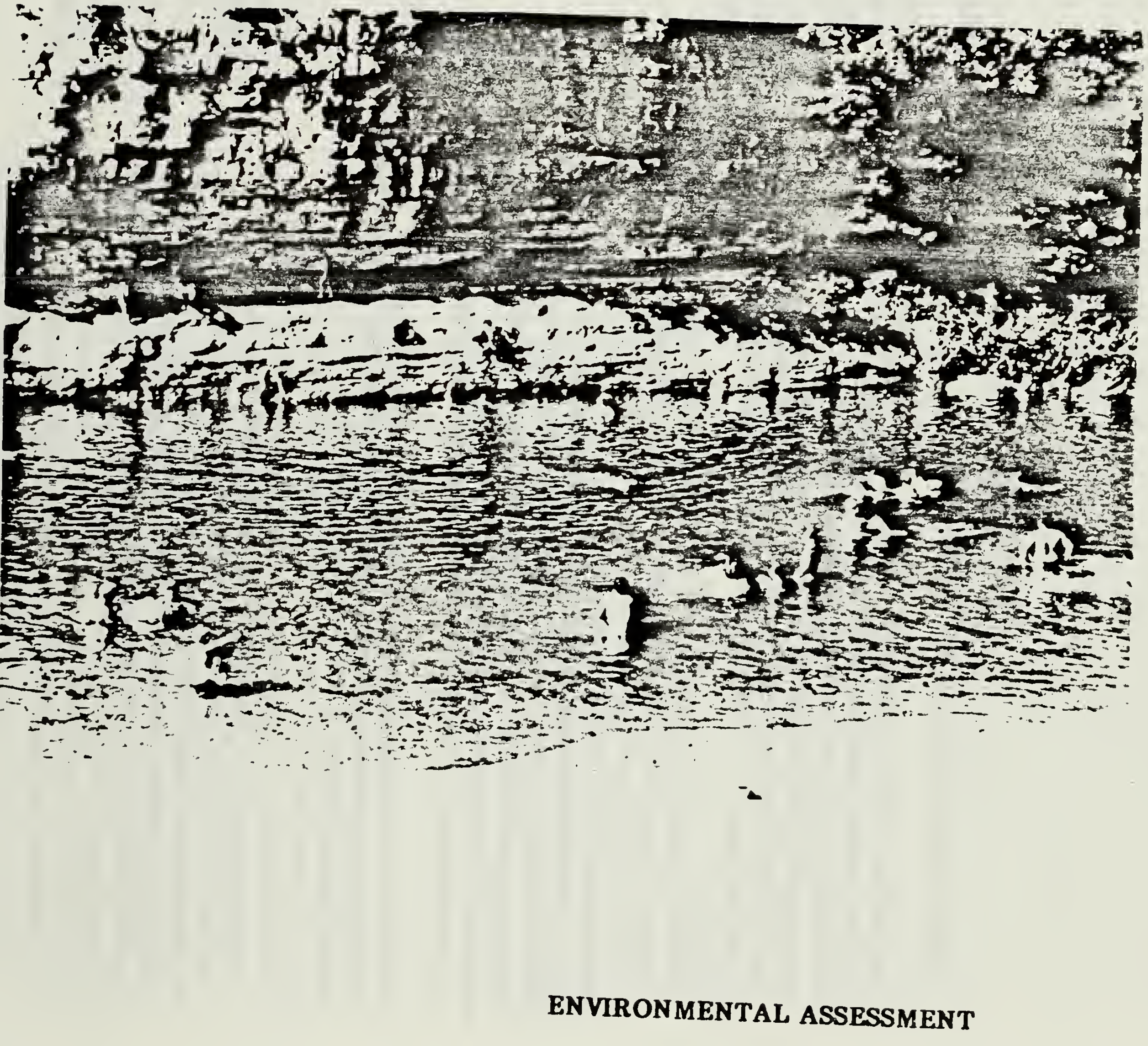
WOOLUM-GILBERT
GILBERT-MAUMEE
MAUMEE-BUFFALO POINT
BUFFALO POINT-RUSH
RUSH-BUFFALO CITY

CHART 8



ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

PROPOSAL

	PRUITT AND BUFFALO DISTRICTS	SILVER HILL DISTRICT
Natural Resources	Vegetation: Loss of vegetative cover and diversity, soil compaction, and erosion of streambanks in heavily used areas would continue; however impacts are acceptable at current levels of use. Limiting use on heavily used river sections would curtail further damage. Known endangered or threatened species would not be effected. Wildlife: Human activity would continue to disturb some animals. Steps are being taken to protect endangered bat species from visitor impacts; no other known threatened or endangered species are impacted. Fish: Information on the impacts of river users on fishery resources is not conclusive at present. The situation will be studied and the river use plan will be amended as necessary to reflect study results. Water Quality: Water quality is presently good and would remain so.	Since proposed levels of use are higher than historic levels, impacts on natural resources similar to those in the Pruitt and Buffalo Districts could be expected to occur; however, the lev of impacts would remain acceptabl
Cultural Resources	Problems with vandalism, pot hunting, and wear and tear on resources would continue but should not increase substantially over present levels.	SAME
Park Facilities	Some crowding would continue to occur at popular access sites and camping areas, but should not substantially increase. Litter and sanitation problems would occur at present levels. To lessen the impacts of camping, visitors would be encouraged to utilize designated areas and such sites that do not receive heavy use. Camping would be monitored to determine future needs and/or restrictions.	Less use occurs on the middle stret of river; and therefore, impacts are less.
Concessions	Restrictions on concessioners' use of access points would have a negative economic impact due to limitations on business growth. Utilization of alternative access points would result in increases in cost for some and decreases for others. Restrictions on the	SAME

Visitor Use/Socioeconomic	Crowding and congestion would continue at popular canoe access sites and camping areas on weekends but would not increase substantially. A permit system, which would be instituted if the ceiling is exceeded, would limit private canoe use and interfere with visitors' plans. Unavoidable hazards due to recreational use use of a floodplain would continue.	Incidents of crowding and congestion could occur if visitor use approaches the proposed ceiling. However, use levels would be moderate and would not create significant problems. The impacts of a permit system would be the same.
River Access	Some inconvenience may occur to a limited number of people resulting from closure of low use sites. Resource protection would be enhanced and opportunity for conflicts between visitors and adjacent landowners would be reduced.	SAME
NPS Management	The proposed actions would require increased supervision and monitoring of recreation use, especially at access points. Regulations would be needed to enforce the provisions of the plan. A permit system would most likely require additional staffing and funding. A public information program would be needed to inform park users of changes in river use regulations.	SAME

ALTERNATIVE II AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

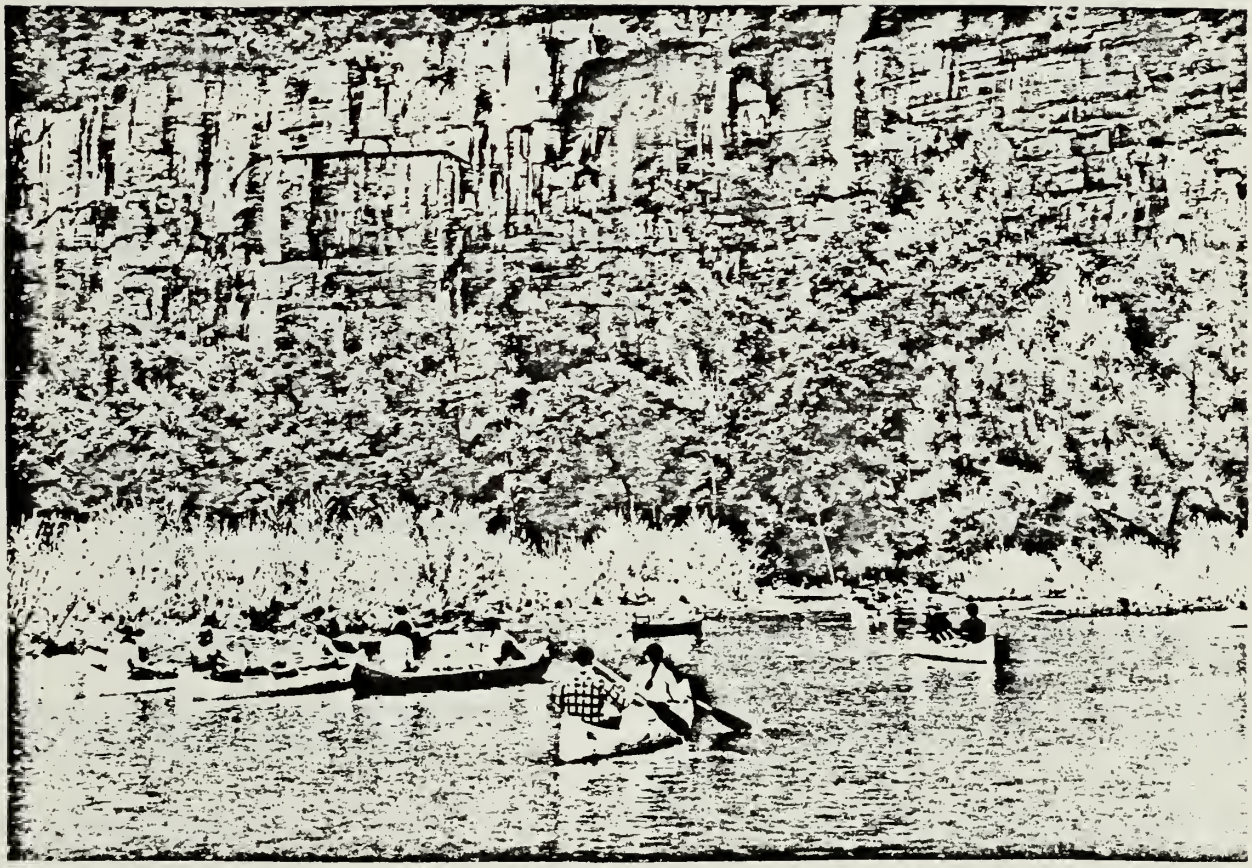
	PRUITT AND BUFFALO DISTRICTS	SILVER HILL DISTRICT
Natural Resources	Vegetation: Loss of vegetative cover and diversity, soil compaction, and erosion of streambanks in heavily used areas would continue; however, impacts are acceptable at current levels of use. Limiting use on heavily used river sections would curtail further damage. Known endangered or threatened species would not be effected. Wildlife: Human activity would continue to disturb some animals. Steps are being taken to protect endangered bat species from visitor impacts; no other known threatened or endangered species are impacted. Fish: Information on impacts of river users on fishery resources is not conclusive at present. The situation will be studied and the river use plan will be amended as necessary, to reflect study results. Water quality: Water quality is presently good, and would remain so.	Same as Proposal.
Cultural Resources	Problems with vandalism, pot hunting, and wear and tear on resources would generally remain at present levels and could potentially decrease in those areas where recreation use is restricted below present level of use.	Same as proposal.
Park Facilities	Crowding at access points and popular camping areas would be alleviated because of decreases in the numbers of recreationists allowed on the popular river sections. Litter and sanitation problems would decrease. On river sections with ceilings based on historic use, some campsites could experience some crowding, but no more than at present.	Same as Proposal.
Concessions	Since use on certain sections of the river would be decreased significantly, concession income would be negatively impacted. Restrictions on concessioners' use of access points would have a negative economic impact due to limitations on business growth. Utilization of alternative access points would result in increases in cost for some and decreases for others. Restrictions on the use of concession permits may have a negative economic impact on concessions.	Same as Proposal.
Visitor Use/Socioeconomic	Crowding and congestion would be generally alleviated at popular canoe access sites and camping areas on weekends because of the reduction in use levels. A permit system which would be instituted	Same as Proposal.

	Some inconvenience may occur to a limited number of people resulting from closure of low use sites. Resource protection would be enhanced and opportunities for conflicts between visitors and adjacent landowners would be reduced.	SAME
NPS Management	Implementation of Alternative II would require a substantial increase in supervision and monitoring of recreation use, especially at access points. Regulations would be needed immediately to enforce the permit system on certain sections of the river. Additional staff and funding would be necessary. A full-scale public information program would be needed to inform park users of changes in river use management.	

ALTERNATIVE I - NO ACTION AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

	PRUITT AND BUFFALO DISTRICTS	SILVER HILL DISTRICT
Natural Resources	Vegetation: Loss of vegetative cover and diversity, soil compaction, and erosion of streambanks in heavily used areas would continue; however, impacts are acceptable at current levels of use. Limiting use on heavily used river sections would curtail further damage. Known endangered or threatened species would not be effected. Wildlife: Human activity would continue to disturb some animals. Steps are being taken to protect endangered bat species from visitor impacts; no other known threatened or endangered species are impacted. Fish: Information on the impacts of river users on fishery resources is not conclusive at present. The situation will be studied and the river use plan will be amended as necessary to reflect study results. Water quality: Water quality is presently good but may deteriorate as river use increases because of litter and sanitation problems.	Since proposed levels of use are higher than historic levels, impacts on natural resources similar to those in the Pruitt and Buffalo Districts could be expected to occur; however, the level of impacts would remain acceptable.
Cultural Resources	Problems with vandalism, pot hunting, and wear and tear on resources would continue and could increase as river use increases.	SAME
Park Facilities	As use increases, crowding at popular access sites and camping areas would most likely increase and overtax litter and sanitation facilities.	SAME
Concessions	No effect	SAME
Visitor Use/Socioeconomic	Crowding and congestion would continue to occur at popular access sites and camping areas on weekends and could accelerate with increases in use. Safety problems would continue due to large numbers of people and canoes on the river and at access sites.	

	tions on closing low-use sites without established criteria may be questioned.	SAME
NPS Management	No change; no effect.	



CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION
LIST OF REFERENCES
ESTABLISHING LEGISLATION
LIST OF PREPARERS

CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

Prior to and during preparation of this plan, the National Park Service discussed management of the river with many local residents, local civic organizations, representatives of user groups and canoe and johnboat concessioners to identify problems and potential solutions.

Public meetings will be held on this document in appropriate locations. In addition, this document will be sent to the following agencies and individuals.

FEDERAL AGENCIES

- Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
- Department of Agriculture
  - Forest Service
  - Soil Conservation Service
- Department of the Army
  - Corps of Engineers
- Department of Housing and Urban Development
- Department of the Interior
  - Bureau of Indian Affairs
  - Bureau of Land Management
  - Bureau of Mines
  - Bureau of Reclamation
  - Fish and Wildlife Service
  - Geological Survey

- Environmental Protection Agency
- Federal Power Commission

STATE AGENCIES

- Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism
- State of Arkansas, Department of Planning
- Arkansas State Historic Preservation Office
- Arkansas Game and Fish Commission
- Arkansas Committee on Stream Preservation
- Arkansas Forestry Commission
- Arkansas Archeological Survey
- Northwest Arkansas Economic Development District, Inc.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS IN ARKANSAS COUNTIES

Baxter
Boone
Marion
Newton
Searcy

INDIVIDUALS AND ORGANIZATIONS

Sierra Club, Area Chapters
Ozark Society, Area Chapters
Arkansas Wildlife Society
Wilderness Society
American Rivers Resources Council
American Rivers Conservation Council
Scenic Seven Association
National Parks and Conservation Association

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CORNELL UNIVERSITY, DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

1981 "River Recreation Carrying Capacity Considerations for the Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River."

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

1975a *Master Plan, Buffalo National River, Arkansas*. Denver: Denver Service Center.

1975b *Wilderness Recommendation, Buffalo National River, Arkansas*. Denver: Denver Service Center.

1975c *Interpretive Prospectus, Buffalo National River, Arkansas*. Denver: Denver Service Center.

1978a *Buffalo National River Wilderness, Final Environmental Statement*. Denver: Denver Service Center.

1978b "Management Policies." Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office.

Public Law 92-237
92nd Congress, S. 7
March 1, 1972

An Act

86 STAT. 44

To provide for the establishment of the Buffalo National River in the State of Arkansas, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That for the purposes of conserving and interpreting an area containing unique scenic and scientific features, and preserving as a free-flowing stream an important segment of the Buffalo River in Arkansas for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations, the Secretary of the Interior (hereinafter referred to as the "Secretary") may establish and administer the Buffalo National River. The boundaries of the national river shall be as generally depicted on the drawing entitled "Proposed Buffalo National River" numbered NR-BUF-7103 and dated December 1967, which shall be on file and available for public inspection in the offices of the National Park Service, Department of the Interior. The Secretary is authorized to make minor revisions of the boundaries of the national river when necessary, after advising the Committees on Interior and Insular Affairs of the United States House of Representatives and the United States Senate in writing, but the total acreage within such boundaries shall not exceed ninety-five thousand seven hundred and thirty acres.

Buffalo National River, Ark. Establishment.

SEC. 2. (a) Within the boundaries of the Buffalo National River, the Secretary may acquire lands and waters or interests therein by donation, purchase or exchange, except that lands owned by the State of Arkansas or a political subdivision thereof may be acquired only by donation: *Provided*, That the Secretary may, with funds appropriated for development of the area, reimburse such State for its share of the cost of facilities developed on State park lands if such facilities were developed in a manner approved by the Secretary and if the development of such facilities commenced subsequent to the enactment of this Act: *Provided further*, That such reimbursement shall not exceed a total of $375,000. When an individual tract of land is only partly within the boundaries of the national river, the Secretary may acquire all of the tract by any of the above methods in order to avoid the payment of severance costs. Land so acquired outside of the boundaries of the national river may be exchanged by the Secretary for non-Federal lands within the national river boundaries, and any portion of the land not utilized for such exchanges may be disposed of in accordance with the provisions of the Federal Property and Administrative Services Act of 1949 (63 Stat. 377; 40 U.S.C. 471 et seq.), as amended. With the concurrence of the agency having custody thereof, any Federal property within the boundaries of the national river may be transferred without consideration to the administrative jurisdiction of the Secretary for administration as part of the national river.

Lands and waters, acquisition.

(b) Except for property which the Secretary determines to be necessary for the purposes of administration, development, access or public use, an owner or owners (hereafter referred to as "owner") of any improved property which is used solely for noncommercial residential purposes on the date of its acquisition by the Secretary or any owner of lands used solely for agricultural purposes (including, but not limited to, grazing) may retain, as a condition of the acquisition of such property or lands, a right of use and occupancy of such property for such residential or agricultural purposes. The term of the right retained shall expire upon the death of the owner or the death of his spouse, whichever occurs later, or in lieu thereof, after a definite term which shall not exceed twenty-five years after the date of acquisition. The owner shall elect, at the time of conveyance, the term of the right

Retention rights.

reserved. The Secretary shall pay the owner the fair market value of the property on the date of such acquisition, less the fair market value of the term retained by the owner. Such right may, during its existence, be conveyed or transferred, but all rights of use and occupancy shall be subject to such terms and conditions as the Secretary deems appropriate to assure the use of such property in accordance with the purposes of this Act. Upon a determination that the property, or any portion thereof, has ceased to be used in accordance with such terms and conditions, the Secretary may terminate the right of use and occupancy by tendering to the holder of such right an amount equal to the fair market value, as of the date of the tender, of that portion of the right which remains unexpired on the date of termination.

"Improved property."

(c) As used in this section the term "improved property" means a detached year-round one-family dwelling which serves as the owner's permanent place of abode at the time of acquisition, and construction of which was begun before September 3, 1969, together with so much of the land on which the dwelling is situated, the said land being in the same ownership as the dwelling, as the Secretary shall designate to be reasonably necessary for the enjoyment of the dwelling for the sole purpose of noncommercial residential use.

Hunting and fishing, rules and regulations.

SEC. 3. The Secretary shall permit hunting and fishing on lands and waters under his jurisdiction within the boundaries of the Buffalo National River in accordance with applicable Federal and State laws, except that he may designate zones where and establish periods when, no hunting or fishing shall be permitted for reasons of public safety, administration, fish or wildlife management, or public use and enjoyment. Except in emergencies, any rules and regulations of the Secretary pursuant to this section shall be put into effect only after consultation with the Arkansas Fish and Game Commission.

Water resource projects, restriction.

SEC. 4. The Federal Power Commission shall not license the construction of any dam, water conduit, reservoir, powerhouse, transmission line, or other project works under the Federal Power Act (41 Stat. 1063), as amended (16 U.S.C. 791a et seq.), on or directly affecting the Buffalo National River and no department or agency of the United States shall assist by loan, grant, license, or otherwise in the construction of any water resources project that would have a direct and adverse effect on the values for which such river is established, as determined by the Secretary. Nothing contained in the foregoing sentence, however, shall preclude licensing of, or assistance to, developments below or above the Buffalo National River or on any stream tributary thereto which will not invade the area or unreasonably diminish the scenic, recreational, and fish and wildlife values present in the area on the date of approval of this Act. No department or agency of the United States shall recommend authorization of any water resources project that would have a direct and adverse effect on the values for which such river is established, as determined by the Secretary, nor shall such department or agency request appropriations to begin construction on any such project, whether heretofore or hereafter authorized, without, at least sixty days in advance, (i) advising the Secretary, in writing, of its intention so to do and (ii) reporting to the Committees on Interior and Insular Affairs of the United States House of Representatives and the United States Senate, respectively, the nature of the project involved and the manner in which such project would conflict with the purposes of this Act or would affect the national river and the values to be protected by it under this Act.

Administration.

SEC. 5. The Secretary shall administer, protect, and develop the Buffalo National River in accordance with the provisions of the Act of August 25, 1916 (39 Stat. 535; 16 U.S.C. 1 et seq.), as amended and supplemented; except that any other statutory authority available to the Secretary for the conservation and management of natural resources may be utilized to the extent he finds such authority will further the purposes of this Act.

Area review; report to President.

SEC. 6. Within three years from the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall review the area within the boundaries of the national river and shall report to the President, in accordance with subsections 3(c) and 3(d) of the Wilderness Act (78 Stat. 890; 16 U.S.C. 1132 (c) and (d)), his recommendation as to the suitability or nonsuitability of any area within the national river for preservation as a wilderness, and any designation of any such area as a wilderness, shall be accomplished in accordance with said subsections of the Wilderness Act.

Appropriation.

SEC. 7. For the acquisition of lands and interests in lands, there are authorized to be appropriated not more than $16,115,000. For development of the national river, there are authorized to be appropriated not more than $283,000 in fiscal year 1974; $2,923,000 in fiscal year 1975; $3,643,000 in fiscal year 1976; $1,262,000 in fiscal year 1977; and $1,260,000 in fiscal year 1978. The sums appropriated each year shall remain available until expended.

Approved March 1, 1972.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY:

HOUSE REPORT No. 92-807 accompanying H. R. 8382 (Comm. on Interior and Insular Affairs).
SENATE REPORT No. 92-130 (Comm. on Interior and Insular Affairs).
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Feb. 9, Senate concurred in House amendment.

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